



Start > Federal law > Classified compilation > Internal laws > 101 Federal Constitution of 18 April 1999 of the Swiss Confederation

# 101

*English is not an official language of the Swiss Confederation. This translation is provided for information purposes only and has no legal force.*

## Federal Constitution of the Swiss Confederation

of 18 April 1999 (Status as of 1 January 2018)

### Preamble

In the name of Almighty God!

*The Swiss People and the Cantons,*

mindful of their responsibility towards creation,

resolved to renew their alliance so as to strengthen liberty, democracy, independence and peace in a spirit of solidarity and openness towards the world,

determined to live together with mutual consideration and respect for their diversity,

conscious of their common achievements and their responsibility towards future generations,

and in the knowledge that only those who use their freedom remain free, and that the strength of a people is measured by the well-being of its weakest members,

*adopt the following Constitution*<sup>1</sup>:

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 18 April 1999 (Federal Decree of 18 Dec. 1998, Federal Council Decree of 11 Aug. 1999; AS 1999 2556; BBl 1997 I 1, 1999 162 5986).

## Title 1 General Provisions

### Art. 1 The Swiss Confederation

The People and the Cantons of Zurich, Bern, Lucerne, Uri, Schwyz, Obwalden and Nidwalden, Glarus, Zug, Fribourg, Solothurn, Basel Stadt and Basel Landschaft, Schaffhausen, Appenzell Ausserrhoden and Appenzell Innerrhoden, St. Gallen, Graubünden, Aargau, Thurgau, Ticino, Vaud, Valais, Neuchâtel, Geneva, and Jura form the Swiss Confederation.

### Art. 2 Aims

<sup>1</sup> The Swiss Confederation shall protect the liberty and rights of the people and safeguard the independence and security of the country.

<sup>2</sup> It shall promote the common welfare, sustainable development, internal cohesion and cultural diversity of the country.

<sup>3</sup> It shall ensure the greatest possible equality of opportunity among its citizens.

<sup>4</sup> It is committed to the long term preservation of natural resources and to a just and peaceful international order.

#### **Art. 3** Cantons

The Cantons are sovereign except to the extent that their sovereignty is limited by the Federal Constitution. They exercise all rights that are not vested in the Confederation.

#### **Art. 4** National languages

The National Languages are German, French, Italian, and Romansh.

#### **Art. 5** Rule of law

<sup>1</sup> All activities of the state are based on and limited by law.

<sup>2</sup> State activities must be conducted in the public interest and be proportionate to the ends sought.

<sup>3</sup> State institutions and private persons shall act in good faith.

<sup>4</sup> The Confederation and the Cantons shall respect international law.

#### **Art. 5a**<sup>1</sup> Subsidiarity

The principle of subsidiarity must be observed in the allocation and performance of state tasks.

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 28 Nov. 2004, in force since 1 Jan. 2008 (Federal Council Decree of 3 Oct. 2003, Federal Council Decree of 26 Jan. 2005, Federal Council Decree of 7 Nov. 2007; AS **2007** 5765; BBI **2002** 2291, **2003** 6591, **2005** 951).

#### **Art. 6** Individual and collective responsibility

All individuals shall take responsibility for themselves and shall, according to their abilities, contribute to achieving the tasks of the state and society.

## **Title 2 Fundamental Rights, Citizenship and Social Goals**

### **Chapter 1 Fundamental Rights**

#### **Art. 7** Human dignity

Human dignity must be respected and protected.

#### **Art. 8** Equality before the law

<sup>1</sup> Every person is equal before the law.

<sup>2</sup> No person may be discriminated against, in particular on grounds of origin, race, gender, age, language, social position, way of life, religious, ideological, or political convictions, or because of a physical, mental or psychological disability.

<sup>3</sup> Men and women have equal rights. The law shall ensure their equality, both in law and in practice, most particularly in the family, in education, and in the workplace. Men and women have the right to equal pay for work of equal value.

<sup>4</sup> The law shall provide for the elimination of inequalities that affect persons with disabilities.

#### **Art. 9** Protection against arbitrary conduct and principle of good faith

Every person has the right to be treated by state authorities in good faith and in a non-arbitrary manner.

**Art. 10** Right to life and to personal freedom

<sup>1</sup> Every person has the right to life. The death penalty is prohibited.

<sup>2</sup> Every person has the right to personal liberty and in particular to physical and mental integrity and to freedom of movement.

<sup>3</sup> Torture and any other form of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment are prohibited.

**Art. 11** Protection of children and young people

<sup>1</sup> Children and young people have the right to the special protection of their integrity and to the encouragement of their development.

<sup>2</sup> They may personally exercise their rights to the extent that their power of judgement allows.

**Art. 12** Right to assistance when in need

Persons in need and unable to provide for themselves have the right to assistance and care, and to the financial means required for a decent standard of living.

**Art. 13** Right to privacy

<sup>1</sup> Every person has the right to privacy in their private and family life and in their home, and in relation to their mail and telecommunications.

<sup>2</sup> Every person has the right to be protected against the misuse of their personal data.

**Art. 14** Right to marry and to have a family

The right to marry and to have a family is guaranteed.

**Art. 15** Freedom of religion and conscience

<sup>1</sup> Freedom of religion and conscience is guaranteed.

<sup>2</sup> Every person has the right to choose freely their religion or their philosophical convictions, and to profess them alone or in community with others.

<sup>3</sup> Every person has the right to join or to belong to a religious community, and to follow religious teachings.

<sup>4</sup> No person may be forced to join or belong to a religious community, to participate in a religious act, or to follow religious teachings.

**Art. 16** Freedom of expression and of information

<sup>1</sup> Freedom of expression and of information is guaranteed.

<sup>2</sup> Every person has the right freely to form, express, and impart their opinions.

<sup>3</sup> Every person has the right freely to receive information to gather it from generally accessible sources and to disseminate it.

**Art. 17** Freedom of the media

<sup>1</sup> Freedom of the press, radio and television and of other forms of dissemination of features and information by means of public telecommunications is guaranteed.

<sup>2</sup> Censorship is prohibited.

<sup>3</sup> The protection of sources is guaranteed.

**Art. 18** Freedom to use any language

The freedom to use any language is guaranteed.

**Art. 19** Right to basic education

The right to an adequate and free basic education is guaranteed

**Art. 20** Academic freedom

Freedom of research and teaching is guaranteed.

**Art. 21** Freedom of artistic expression

Freedom of artistic expression is guaranteed.

**Art. 22** Freedom of assembly

<sup>1</sup> Freedom of assembly is guaranteed.

<sup>2</sup> Every person has the right to organise meetings and to participate or not to participate in meetings.

**Art. 23** Freedom of association

<sup>1</sup> Freedom of association is guaranteed.

<sup>2</sup> Every person has the right to form, join or belong to an association and to participate in the activities of an association.

<sup>3</sup> No person may be compelled to join or to belong to an association.

**Art. 24** Freedom of domicile

<sup>1</sup> Swiss citizens have the right to establish their domicile anywhere in the country.

<sup>2</sup> They have the right to leave or to enter Switzerland.

**Art. 25** Protection against expulsion, extradition and deportation

<sup>1</sup> Swiss citizens may not be expelled from Switzerland and may only be extradited to a foreign authority with their consent.

<sup>2</sup> Refugees may not be deported or extradited to a state in which they will be persecuted.

<sup>3</sup> No person may be deported to a state in which they face the threat of torture or any other form of cruel or inhumane treatment or punishment.

**Art. 26** Guarantee of ownership

<sup>1</sup> The right to own property is guaranteed.

<sup>2</sup> The compulsory purchase of property and any restriction on ownership that is equivalent to compulsory purchase shall be compensated in full.

**Art. 27** Economic freedom

<sup>1</sup> Economic freedom is guaranteed.

<sup>2</sup> Economic freedom includes in particular the freedom to choose an occupation as well as the freedom to pursue a private economic activity.

**Art. 28** Right to form professional associations

<sup>1</sup> Employees, employers and their organisations have the right to join together in order to protect their interests, to form associations and to join or not to join such associations.

<sup>2</sup> Disputes must wherever possible be resolved through negotiation or mediation.

<sup>3</sup> Strikes and lock outs are permitted if they relate to employment relations and if they do not contravene any requirements to preserve peaceful employment relations or to conduct conciliation proceedings.

<sup>4</sup> The law may prohibit certain categories of person from taking strike action.

#### **Art. 29** General procedural guarantees

<sup>1</sup> Every person has the right to equal and fair treatment in judicial and administrative proceedings and to have their case decided within a reasonable time.

<sup>2</sup> Each party to a case has the right to be heard.

<sup>3</sup> Any person who does not have sufficient means has the right to free legal advice and assistance unless their case appears to have no prospect of success. If it is necessary in order to safeguard their rights, they also have the right to free legal representation in court.

#### **Art. 29a**<sup>1</sup> Guarantee of access to the courts

In a legal dispute, every person has the right to have their case determined by a judicial authority. The Confederation and the Cantons may by law preclude the determination by the courts of certain exceptional categories of case.

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 12 March 2000, in force since 1 Jan. 2007 (Federal Decree of 8 Oct. 1999, Federal Council Decree of 17 May 2000, Federal Decree of 8 March 2005; AS 2002 3148, 2006 1059; BBl 1997 I 1, 1999 8633, 2000 2990, 2001 4202).

#### **Art. 30** Judicial proceedings

<sup>1</sup> Any person whose case falls to be judicially decided has the right to have their case heard by a legally constituted, competent, independent and impartial court. Ad hoc courts are prohibited.

<sup>2</sup> Unless otherwise provided by law, any person against whom civil proceedings have been raised has the right to have their case decided by a court within the jurisdiction in which they reside.

<sup>3</sup> Unless the law provides otherwise, court hearings and the delivery of judgments shall be in public.

#### **Art. 31** Deprivation of liberty

<sup>1</sup> No person may be deprived of their liberty other than in the circumstances and in the manner provided for by the law.

<sup>2</sup> Any person deprived of their liberty has the right to be notified without delay and in a language they can understand of the reasons for their detention and of their rights. They must be given the opportunity to exercise their rights, in particular, the right to have their next-of-kin informed.

<sup>3</sup> Any person in pre-trial detention has the right to be brought before a court without delay. The court decides whether the person must remain in detention or be released. Any person in pre-trial detention has the right to have their case decided within a reasonable time.

<sup>4</sup> Any person who has been deprived of their liberty by a body other than a court has the right to have recourse to a court at any time. The court shall decide as quickly as possible on the legality of their detention.

#### **Art. 32** Criminal proceedings

<sup>1</sup> Every person is presumed innocent until they have been found guilty by a legally enforceable judgment.

<sup>2</sup> Every accused person has the right to be notified as quickly and comprehensively as possible of the charge brought against them. They must be given the opportunity to assert their rights to a proper defence.

<sup>3</sup> Every convicted person has the right to have their conviction reviewed by a higher court, with the exception of cases in which the Federal Supreme Court sits at first instance.

#### **Art. 33** Right of petition

<sup>1</sup> Every person has the right, without prejudice, to petition the authorities.

<sup>2</sup> The authorities must acknowledge receipt of such petitions.

#### **Art. 34** Political rights

<sup>1</sup> Political rights are guaranteed.

<sup>2</sup> The guarantee of political rights protects the freedom of the citizen to form an opinion and to give genuine expression to his or her will.

#### **Art. 35** Upholding of fundamental rights

<sup>1</sup> Fundamental rights must be upheld throughout the legal system.

<sup>2</sup> Whoever acts on behalf of the state is bound by fundamental rights and is under a duty to contribute to their implementation.

<sup>3</sup> The authorities shall ensure that fundamental rights, where appropriate, apply to relationships among private persons.

#### **Art. 36** Restrictions on fundamental rights

<sup>1</sup> Restrictions on fundamental rights must have a legal basis. Significant restrictions must have their basis in a federal act. The foregoing does not apply in cases of serious and immediate danger where no other course of action is possible.

<sup>2</sup> Restrictions on fundamental rights must be justified in the public interest or for the protection of the fundamental rights of others.

<sup>3</sup> Any restrictions on fundamental rights must be proportionate.

<sup>4</sup> The essence of fundamental rights is sacrosanct.

## Chapter 2 Citizenship and Political Rights

#### **Art. 37** Citizenship

<sup>1</sup> Any person who is a citizen of a commune and of the Canton to which that commune belongs is a Swiss citizen.

<sup>2</sup> No person may be given preferential treatment or suffer prejudice because of their citizenship. The foregoing does not apply to regulations on political rights in citizens' communes and corporations or to participation in the assets thereof, unless cantonal legislation provides otherwise.

#### **Art. 38** Acquisition and deprivation of citizenship

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation shall regulate the acquisition and deprivation of citizenship by birth, marriage or adoption. It shall also regulate the deprivation of Swiss citizenship on other grounds, together with the reinstatement of citizenship.

<sup>2</sup> It shall legislate on the minimum requirements for the naturalisation of foreign nationals by the Cantons and grant naturalisation permits.

<sup>3</sup> It shall enact simplified regulations on the naturalisation of:

- a. third generation immigrants;
- b. stateless children.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 12 Feb. 2017, in force since 12 Feb. 2017 (Federal Decree of 30 Sept. 2016, Federal Council Decree of 13 April 2017 - AS **2017** 2643; BBl **2015** 769 1327, **2017** 3387).

#### **Art. 39** Exercise of political rights

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation shall regulate the exercise of political rights in federal matters, and the Cantons shall regulate their exercise at cantonal and communal matters.

<sup>2</sup> Political rights are exercised in the commune in which a citizen resides, although the Confederation and the Cantons may provide for exceptions.

<sup>3</sup> No person may exercise their political rights contemporaneously in more than one Canton.

<sup>4</sup> A Canton may provide that a person newly registered as a resident may exercise the right to vote in cantonal and communal matters only after a waiting period of a maximum of three months of permanent settlement.

#### **Art. 40** The Swiss abroad

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation shall encourage relations among the Swiss abroad and their relations with Switzerland. It may support organisations that pursue this objective.

<sup>2</sup> It shall legislate on the rights and obligations of the Swiss abroad, in particular in relation to the exercise of political rights in the Confederation, the fulfilment of the obligation to perform military or alternative service, welfare support and social security.

## Chapter 3 Social Objectives

#### **Art. 41**

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation and the Cantons shall, as a complement to personal responsibility and private initiative, endeavour to ensure that:

- a. every person has access to social security;
- b. every person has access to the health care that they require;
- c. families are protected and encouraged as communities of adults and children;
- d. every person who is fit to work can earn their living by working under fair conditions;

e.

any person seeking accommodation for themselves and their family can find suitable accommodation on reasonable terms;

f.

children and young people as well as persons of employable age can obtain an education and undergo basic and advanced training in accordance with their abilities;

g.

children and young people are encouraged to develop into independent and socially responsible people and are supported in their social, cultural and political integration.

<sup>2</sup> The Confederation and Cantons shall endeavour to ensure that every person is protected against the economic consequences of old-age, invalidity, illness, accident, unemployment, maternity, being orphaned and being widowed.

<sup>3</sup> They shall endeavour to achieve these social objectives within the scope of their constitutional powers and the resources available to them.

<sup>4</sup> No direct right to state benefits may be established on the basis of these social objectives.

## Title 3 Confederation, Cantons and Communes

### Chapter 1 Relations between the Confederation and the Cantons

#### Section 1 Duties of the Confederation and the Cantons

##### Art. 42 Duties of the Confederation

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation shall fulfil the duties that are assigned to it by Federal Constitution.

<sup>2</sup> ...<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Repealed by the popular vote on 28 Nov. 2004, with effect from 1 Jan. 2008 (Federal Decree of 3 Oct. 2003, Federal Council Decree of 26 Jan. 2005, Federal Council Decree of 7 Nov. 2007; AS 2007 5765; BBl 2002 2291, 2003 6591, 2005 951).

##### Art. 43 Duties of the Cantons

The Cantons decide on the duties that they must fulfil within the scope of their powers.

##### Art. 43a<sup>1</sup> Principles for the allocation and fulfilment of state tasks

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation only undertakes tasks that the Cantons are unable to perform or which require uniform regulation by the Confederation.

<sup>2</sup> The collective body that benefits from a public service bears the costs thereof.

<sup>3</sup> The collective body that bears the costs of a public service may decide on the nature of that service.

<sup>4</sup> Universally provided services must be made available to every person in a comparable manner.

<sup>5</sup> State tasks must be fulfilled economically and in accordance with demand.

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 28 Nov 2004, in force since 1 Jan. 2008 (Federal Council Decree of 3 Oct 2003, Federal Council Decree of 26 Jan. 2005, Federal Council Decree of 7 Nov. 2007; AS 2007 5765; BBl 2002 2291, 2003 6591, 2005 951).

## Section 2 Cooperation between the Confederation and the Cantons

### Art. 44 Principles

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation and the Cantons shall support each other in the fulfilment of their duties and shall generally cooperate with each other.

<sup>2</sup> They owe each other a duty of consideration and support. They shall provide each other with administrative assistance and mutual judicial assistance.

<sup>3</sup> Disputes between Cantons or between Cantons and the Confederation shall wherever possible be resolved by negotiation or mediation.

### Art. 45 Participation in federal decision-making

<sup>1</sup> In the cases specified by the Federal Constitution, the Cantons shall participate in the federal decision making process, and in particular in the legislative process.

<sup>2</sup> The Confederation shall inform the Cantons of its intentions fully and in good time. It shall consult the Cantons where their interests are affected.

### Art. 46 Implementation of federal law

<sup>1</sup> The Cantons shall implement federal law in accordance with the Federal Constitution and federal legislation.

<sup>2</sup> The Confederation and the Cantons may together agree that the Cantons should achieve specific goals in the implementation of federal law and may to this end conduct programmes that receive financial support from the Confederation.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>3</sup> The Confederation shall allow the Cantons all possible discretion to organise their own affairs and shall take account of cantonal particularities.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 28 Nov 2004, in force since 1 Jan. 2008 (Federal Council Decree of 3 Oct 2003, Federal Council Decree of 26 Jan. 2005, Federal Council Decree of 7 Nov. 2007; AS 2007 5765; BBl 2002 2291, 2003 6591, 2005 951).

<sup>2</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 28 Nov 2004, in force since 1 Jan. 2008 (Federal Council Decree of 3 Oct 2003, Federal Council Decree of 26 Jan. 2005, Federal Council Decree of 7 Nov. 2007; AS 2007 5765; BBl 2002 2291, 2003 6591, 2005 951).

### Art. 47 Autonomy of the Cantons

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation shall respect the autonomy of the Cantons.

<sup>2</sup> It shall leave the Cantons sufficient tasks of their own and respect their organisational autonomy. It shall leave the Cantons with sufficient sources of finance and contribute towards ensuring that they have the financial resources required to fulfil their tasks.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 28 Nov 2004, in force since 1 Jan. 2008 (Federal Council Decree of 3 Oct 2003, Federal Council Decree of 26 Jan. 2005, Federal Council Decree of 7 Nov. 2007; AS 2007 5765; BBl 2002 2291, 2003 6591, 2005 951).

### Art. 48 Intercantonal agreements

<sup>1</sup> The Cantons may enter into agreements with each other and establish common organisations and institutions. In particular, they may jointly undertake tasks of regional importance together.

<sup>2</sup> The Confederation may participate in such organisations or institutions within the scope of its powers.

<sup>3</sup> Agreements between Cantons must not be contrary to the law, to the interests of the Confederation or to the rights of other Cantons. The Confederation must be notified of such agreements.

<sup>4</sup> The Cantons may by intercantonal agreement authorise intercantonal bodies to issue legislative provisions that implement an intercantonal agreement, provided the agreement:

- a. has been approved under the same procedure that applies to other legislation;
- b. determines the basic content of the provisions.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>5</sup> The Cantons shall comply with intercantonal law.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 28 Nov 2004, in force since 1 Jan. 2008 (Federal Council Decree of 3 Oct 2003, Federal Council Decree of 26 Jan. 2005, Federal Council Decree of 7 Nov. 2007; AS **2007** 5765; BBl **2002** 2291, **2003** 6591, **2005** 951).

<sup>2</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 28 Nov 2004, in force since 1 Jan. 2008 (Federal Council Decree of 3 Oct 2003, Federal Council Decree of 26 Jan. 2005, Federal Council Decree of 7 Nov. 2007; AS **2007** 5765; BBl **2002** 2291, **2003** 6591, **2005** 951).

**Art. 48a**<sup>1</sup> Declaration of general application and requirement of participation

<sup>1</sup> At the request of interested Cantons, the Confederation may declare intercantonal agreements to be generally binding or require Cantons to participate in intercantonal agreements in the following fields:

- a. the execution of criminal penalties and measures;
- b.<sup>2</sup> school education in the matters specified in Article 62 paragraph 4;
- c.<sup>3</sup> cantonal institutions of higher education;
- d. cultural institutions of supra-regional importance;
- e. waste management;
- f. waste water treatment;
- g. urban transport;
- h. advanced medical science and specialist clinics;
- i. institutions for the rehabilitation and care of invalids.

<sup>2</sup> A declaration of general application is made in the form of a federal decree.

<sup>3</sup> The law shall specify the requirements for a declaration of general application and for a participation requirement and regulate the procedure.

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 28 Nov 2004, in force since 1 Jan. 2008 (Federal Council Decree of 3 Oct 2003, Federal Council Decree of 26 Jan. 2005, Federal Council Decree of 7 Nov. 2007; AS 2007 5765; BBI 2002 2291, 2003 6591, 2005 951).

<sup>2</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 21 May 2006 (Federal Decree of 16 Dec. 2005, Federal Council Decree of 27 July 2006; AS 2006 3033; BBI 2005 5479 5547 7273, 2006 6725).

<sup>3</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 21 May 2006 (Federal Decree of 16 Dec. 2005, Federal Council Decree of 27 July 2006; AS 2006 3033; BBI 2005 5479 5547 7273, 2006 6725).

#### **Art. 49** Precedence of and compliance with federal law

<sup>1</sup> Federal law takes precedence over any conflicting provision of cantonal law.

<sup>2</sup> The Confederation shall ensure that the Cantons comply with federal law.

### Section 3 Communes

#### **Art. 50**

<sup>1</sup> The autonomy of the communes is guaranteed in accordance with cantonal law.

<sup>2</sup> The Confederation shall take account in its activities of the possible consequences for the communes.

<sup>3</sup> In doing so, it shall take account of the special position of the cities and urban areas as well as the mountain regions.

### Section 4 Federal Guarantees

#### **Art. 51** Cantonal constitutions

<sup>1</sup> Each Canton shall adopt a democratic constitution. This requires the approval of the People and must be capable of being revised if the majority of those eligible to vote so request.

<sup>2</sup> Each cantonal constitution shall require the guarantee of the Confederation. The Confederation shall guarantee a constitution provided it is not contrary to federal law.

#### **Art. 52** Constitutional order

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation shall protect the constitutional order of the Cantons.

<sup>2</sup> It shall intervene when public order in a Canton is disrupted or under threat and the Canton in question is not able to maintain order alone or with the aid of other Cantons.

#### **Art. 53** Number and territory of the Cantons

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation shall protect the existence and territory of the Cantons.

<sup>2</sup> Any change in the number of Cantons requires the consent of the citizens and the Cantons concerned together with the consent of the People and the Cantons.

<sup>3</sup> Any change in territory between Cantons requires the consent both of the Cantons concerned and of their citizens as well as the approval of the Federal Assembly in the form of a Federal Decree.

<sup>4</sup> Inter-cantonal boundary adjustments may be made by agreement between the Cantons concerned.

## Chapter 2 Powers

### Section 1 Relations with Foreign States

#### **Art. 54** Foreign relations

<sup>1</sup> Foreign relations are the responsibility of the Confederation.

<sup>2</sup> The Confederation shall ensure that the independence of Switzerland and its welfare is safeguarded; it shall in particular assist in the alleviation of need and poverty in the world and promote respect for human rights and democracy, the peaceful co-existence of peoples as well as the conservation of natural resources.

<sup>3</sup> It shall respect the powers of the Cantons and protect their interests.

#### **Art. 55** Participation of the Cantons in foreign policy decisions

<sup>1</sup> The Cantons shall be consulted on foreign policy decisions that affect their powers or their essential interests.

<sup>2</sup> The Confederation shall inform the Cantons fully and in good time and shall consult with them.

<sup>3</sup> The views of the Cantons are of particular importance if their powers are affected. In such cases, the Cantons shall participate in international negotiations in an appropriate manner.

#### **Art. 56** Relations between the Cantons and foreign states

<sup>1</sup> A Canton may conclude treaties with foreign states on matters that lie within the scope of its powers.

<sup>2</sup> Such treaties must not conflict with the law or the interests of the Confederation, or with the law of any other Cantons. The Canton must inform the Confederation before concluding such a treaty.

<sup>3</sup> A Canton may deal directly with lower ranking foreign authorities; in other cases, the Confederation shall conduct relations with foreign states on behalf of a Canton.

### Section 2 Security, National Defence, Civil Defence

#### **Art. 57** Security

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation and the Cantons shall within the scope of their powers ensure the security of the country and the protection of the population.

<sup>2</sup> They shall coordinate their efforts in the area of internal security.

#### **Art. 58** Armed forces

<sup>1</sup> Switzerland shall have armed forces. In principle, the armed forces shall be organised as a militia.

<sup>2</sup> The armed forces serve to prevent war and to maintain peace; they defend the country and its population. They shall support the civilian authorities in safeguarding the country against serious threats to internal security and in dealing with exceptional situations. Further duties may be provided for by law.

<sup>3</sup> The deployment of the armed forces is the responsibility of the Confederation.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 28 Nov 2004, in force since 1 Jan. 2008 (Federal Council Decree of 3 Oct 2003, Federal Council Decree of 26 Jan. 2005, Federal Council Decree of 7 Nov. 2007; AS 2007 5765; BBl 2002 2291, 2003 6591, 2005 951).

**Art. 59** Military service and alternative service

<sup>1</sup> Every Swiss man is required to do military service. Alternative civilian service shall be provided for by law.

<sup>2</sup> Military service is voluntary for Swiss women.

<sup>3</sup> Any Swiss man who does not do military or alternative service is liable to pay a tax. This tax is levied by the Confederation and assessed and collected by the Cantons.

<sup>4</sup> The Confederation shall legislate for fair compensation for loss of income.

<sup>5</sup> Persons who suffer damage to their health or lose their lives while doing military or alternative civilian service are entitled to appropriate support from the Confederation, whether for themselves or for their next of kin.

**Art. 60** Armed forces organisation, training and equipment

<sup>1</sup> Armed forces legislation, together with the organisation, training and equipment of the armed forces, is the responsibility of the Confederation.

<sup>2</sup> ...<sup>1</sup>

<sup>3</sup> The Confederation may, in return for appropriate compensation, take over the running of cantonal military installations

<sup>1</sup> Repealed by the popular vote on 28 Nov 2004, with effect from 1 Jan. 2008 (Federal Council Decree of 3 Oct 2003, Federal Council Decree of 26 Jan. 2005, Federal Council Decree of 7 Nov. 2007; AS 2007 5765; BBl 2002 2291, 2003 6591, 2005 951).

**Art. 61** Civil defence

<sup>1</sup> The legislation on the civil defence of persons and property against the effects of armed conflicts is the responsibility of the Confederation.

<sup>2</sup> The Confederation shall legislate on the deployment of civil defence units in the event of disasters and emergencies.

<sup>3</sup> It may declare civil defence service to be compulsory for men. For women, such service is voluntary.

<sup>4</sup> The Confederation shall legislate on fair compensation for loss of income.

<sup>5</sup> Persons who suffer damage to their health or lose their lives while doing civil defence service are entitled to appropriate support from the Confederation, whether for themselves or for their next of kin.

## Section 3 Education, Research and Culture

**Art. 61a**<sup>1</sup> Swiss Education Area

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation and the Cantons shall, within the scope of their powers, jointly ensure the high quality and accessibility of the Swiss Education Area.

<sup>2</sup> They shall coordinate their efforts and ensure their cooperation through joint administrative bodies and other measures.

<sup>3</sup> They shall ensure in the fulfilment of their duties<sup>2</sup> that general and vocational courses of study achieve equal recognition in society.

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 21 May 2006 (Federal Decree of 16 Dec. 2005, Federal Council Decree of 27 July 2006; AS **2006** 3033; BBI **2005** 5479 5547 7273, **2006** 6725).

<sup>2</sup> Revised by the Editing Committee of the Federal Assembly, Art. 58 para. 1 ParIA (SR **171.10**).

#### **Art. 62** School education<sup>\*1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Cantons are responsible for the system of school education.

<sup>2</sup> They shall ensure the provision of an adequate basic education that is available to all children. Basic education is mandatory and is managed or supervised by the state. At state schools it is free of charge.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>3</sup> The Cantons shall ensure that adequate special needs education is provided to all children and young people with disabilities up to the age of 20.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Where harmonisation of school education is not achieved by means of coordination in the areas of school entry age and compulsory school attendance, the duration and objectives of levels of education, and the transition for one level to another, as well as the recognition of qualifications, the Confederation shall issue regulations to achieve such harmonisation.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>5</sup> The Confederation shall regulate the start of the school year.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>6</sup> The Cantons shall participate in the drafting of federal legislation on school education that affects cantonal responsibilities, and special account shall be taken of their opinions.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1\*</sup> With transitional provision.

<sup>2</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 21 May 2006 (Federal Decree of 16 Dec. 2005, Federal Council Decree of 27 July 2006; AS **2006** 3033; BBI **2005** 5479 5547 7273, **2006** 6725).

<sup>3</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 28 Nov 2004, in force since 1 Jan. 2008 (Federal Council Decree of 3 Oct 2003, Federal Council Decree of 26 Jan. 2005, Federal Council Decree of 7 Nov. 2007; AS **2007** 5765; BBI **2002** 2291, **2003** 6591, **2005** 951).

<sup>4</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 21 May 2006 (Federal Decree of 16 Dec. 2005, Federal Council Decree of 27 July 2006; AS **2006** 3033; BBI **2005** 5479 5547 7273, **2006** 6725).

<sup>5</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 21 May 2006 (Federal Decree of 16 Dec. 2005, Federal Council Decree of 27 July 2006; AS **2006** 3033; BBI **2005** 5479 5547 7273, **2006** 6725).

<sup>6</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 21 May 2006 (Federal Decree of 16 Dec. 2005, Federal Council Decree of 27 July 2006; AS **2006** 3033; BBI **2005** 5479 5547 7273, **2006** 6725).

#### **Art. 63**<sup>1</sup> Vocational and professional education and training

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation shall issue regulations on vocational and professional education and training.

<sup>2</sup> It shall encourage the provision of a diverse and accessible range of courses in vocational and professional education and training.

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 21 May 2006 (Federal Decree of 16 Dec. 2005, Federal Council Decree of 27 July 2006; AS **2006** 3033; BBI **2005** 5479 5547 7273, **2006** 6725).

#### **Art. 63a**<sup>1</sup> Higher education institutions

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation shall manage the Federal Institutes of Technology. It may establish, take over or manage additional universities and other higher education institutions.

<sup>2</sup> It shall support the cantonal universities and may make financial contributions to other higher education institutions that it recognises.

<sup>3</sup> The Confederation and the Cantons are jointly responsible for the coordination and guarantee of quality in Swiss higher education. In fulfilling this responsibility, they shall take account of the autonomy of the universities and the various bodies responsible for them and ensure the equal treatment of institutions with the same functions.

<sup>4</sup> In order to fulfil their duties, the Confederation and the Cantons shall enter into agreements and delegate certain powers to joint administrative authorities. The law shall regulate the powers that may be delegated, and determine the principles governing the organisation of and procedures for coordination.

<sup>5</sup> If the Confederation and the Cantons fail to reach their common goals by means of coordination, the Confederation shall issue regulations on levels of studies and the transition from one level to another, on postgraduate education and on the recognition of institutions and qualifications. In addition, the Confederation may impose standard funding principles for subsidising of universities, and may make subsidies contingent on universities sharing particularly cost-intensive activities.

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 21 May 2006 (Federal Decree of 16 Dec. 2005, Federal Council Decree of 27 July 2006; AS **2006** 3033; BBI **2005** 5479 5547 7273, **2006** 6725).

#### **Art. 64** Research

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation shall promote scientific research and innovation.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>2</sup> It may make its support conditional in particular on quality assurance and coordination being guaranteed.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>3</sup> It may establish, take over or run research institutes.

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 21 May 2006 (Federal Decree of 16 Dec. 2005, Federal Council Decree of 27 July 2006; AS **2006** 3033; BBI **2005** 5479 5547 7273, **2006** 6725).

<sup>2</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 21 May 2006 (Federal Decree of 16 Dec. 2005, Federal Council Decree of 27 July 2006; AS **2006** 3033; BBI **2005** 5479 5547 7273, **2006** 6725).

#### **Art. 64a**<sup>1</sup> Continuing education and training

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation shall specify principles governing continuing education and training.

<sup>2</sup> It may promote continuing education and training.

<sup>3</sup> The law shall specify the fields of and the criteria for such promotion.

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 21 May 2006 (Federal Decree of 16 Dec. 2005, Federal Council Decree of 27 July 2006; AS **2006** 3033; BBI **2005** 5479 5547 7273, **2006** 6725).

#### **Art. 65** Statistics

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation shall compile the necessary statistical data on the status and trends in the population, the economy, society, education, research, the land and the environment in Switzerland.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>2</sup> It may issue regulations on the harmonisation and maintenance of official registers in order to reduce the cost of compiling data.

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 21 May 2006 (Federal Decree of 16 Dec. 2005, Federal Council Decree of 27 July 2006; AS **2006** 3033; BBI **2005** 5479 5547 7273, **2006** 6725).

**Art. 66 Education grants<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation may contribute to cantonal expenditure on grants provided to students at universities and higher education institutions. It may encourage the intercantonal harmonisation of education grants and lay down principles for the payment of education grants.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> It may also supplement cantonal measures while preserving cantonal autonomy in education matters by taking its own measures to promote education.

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 21 May 2006 (Federal Decree of 16 Dec. 2005, Federal Council Decree of 27 July 2006; AS **2006** 3033; BBI **2005** 5479 5547 7273, **2006** 6725).

<sup>2</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 21 May 2006 (Federal Decree of 16 Dec. 2005, Federal Council Decree of 27 July 2006; AS **2006** 3033; BBI **2005** 5479 5547 7273, **2006** 6725).

**Art. 67 Encouragement of children and young people<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> In fulfilling their duties, the Confederation and Cantons shall take account of the special need of children and young people to receive encouragement and protection.

<sup>2</sup> The Confederation may supplement cantonal measures by supporting extra-curricular work with children and young people.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 21 May 2006 (Federal Decree of 16 Dec. 2005, Federal Council Decree of 27 July 2006; AS **2006** 3033; BBI **2005** 5479 5547 7273, **2006** 6725).

<sup>2</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 21 May 2006 (Federal Decree of 16 Dec. 2005, Federal Council Decree of 27 July 2006; AS **2006** 3033; BBI **2005** 5479 5547 7273, **2006** 6725).

**Art. 67a<sup>1</sup> Musical education**

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation and Cantons shall encourage musical education, in particular that of children and young people.

<sup>2</sup> They shall endeavour within the scope of their powers to ensure high-quality music teaching in schools. If the Cantons are unable to harmonise the goals of music teaching in schools by means of coordination, the Confederation shall issue the required regulations.

<sup>3</sup> In consultation with the Cantons, the Confederation shall set out principles to help young people to engage in musical activities and to encourage musically gifted persons.

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 23 Sept. 2012, in force since 23 Sept. 2012 (Federal Decree of 15 March 2012, Federal Council Decree of 29 Jan. 2013; AS **2013** 435; BBI **2009** 613, **2010** 1, **2012** 3443 6899, **2013** 1135).

**Art. 68 Sport**

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation shall encourage sport, and in particular education in sport.

<sup>2</sup> It shall operate a sports school.

<sup>3</sup> It may issue regulations on sport for young people and declare the teaching of sport in schools to be compulsory.

**Art. 69 Culture**

<sup>1</sup> Cultural matters are a cantonal responsibility.

<sup>2</sup> The Confederation may support cultural activities of national interest as well as art and music, in particular in the field of education.

<sup>3</sup> In the fulfilment of its duties, it shall take account of the cultural and linguistic diversity of the country.

#### **Art. 70 Languages**

<sup>1</sup> The official languages of the Confederation are German, French and Italian. Romansh is also an official language of the Confederation when communicating with persons who speak Romansh.

<sup>2</sup> The Cantons shall decide on their official languages. In order to preserve harmony between linguistic communities, the Cantons shall respect the traditional territorial distribution of languages and take account of indigenous linguistic minorities.

<sup>3</sup> The Confederation and the Cantons shall encourage understanding and exchange between the linguistic communities.

<sup>4</sup> The Confederation shall support the plurilingual Cantons in the fulfilment of their special duties.

<sup>5</sup> The Confederation shall support measures by the Cantons of Graubünden and Ticino to preserve and promote the Romansh and the Italian languages.

#### **Art. 71 Cinema**

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation may encourage Swiss film production and film culture.

<sup>2</sup> It may issue regulations to promote the diversity and the quality of the cinematographic works that are offered.

#### **Art. 72 Church and state**

<sup>1</sup> The regulation of the relationship between the church and the state is the responsibility of the Cantons.

<sup>2</sup> The Confederation and the Cantons may within the scope of their powers take measures to preserve public peace between the members of different religious communities.

<sup>3</sup> The construction of minarets is prohibited.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 29 Nov. 2009, in force since 29 Nov. 2009 (Federal Decree of 12 June 2009, Federal Council Decree of 5 May 2010; AS **2010** 2161; BBl **2008** 6851 7603, **2009** 4381, **2010** 3437).

### **Section 4 Environment and Spatial Planning**

#### **Art. 73 Sustainable development**

The Confederation and the Cantons shall endeavour to achieve a balanced and sustainable relationship between nature and its capacity to renew itself and the demands placed on it by the population.

#### **Art. 74 Protection of the environment**

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation shall legislate on the protection of the population and its natural environment against damage or nuisance.

<sup>2</sup> It shall ensure that such damage or nuisance is avoided. The costs of avoiding or eliminating such damage or nuisance are borne by those responsible for causing it.

<sup>3</sup> The Cantons are responsible for the implementation of the relevant federal regulations, except where the law reserves this duty for the Confederation.

**Art. 75 Spatial planning**

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation shall lay down principles on spatial planning. These principles are binding on the Cantons and serve to ensure the appropriate and economic use of the land and its properly ordered settlement.

<sup>2</sup> The Confederation shall encourage and coordinate the efforts of the Cantons and shall cooperate with them.

<sup>3</sup> Confederation and Cantons shall take account of the requirements of spatial planning in fulfilling their duties.

**Art. 75a<sup>1</sup> National Land Survey**

<sup>1</sup> The National Land Survey is the responsibility of the Confederation.

<sup>2</sup> The Confederation shall issue regulations on official surveying.

<sup>3</sup> It may issue regulations on the harmonisation of official information relating to the land.

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 28 Nov 2004, in force since 1 Jan. 2008 (Federal Council Decree of 3 Oct 2003, Federal Council Decree of 26 Jan. 2005, Federal Council Decree of 7 Nov. 2007; AS 2007 5765; BBl 2002 2291, 2003 6591, 2005 951).

**Art. 75b<sup>1</sup> Second homes<sup>\*2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> No more than 20 per cent of the total stock of residential units and the gross residential floor area in any commune may be used as second homes.

<sup>2</sup> The law shall require communes to publish their first home percentage plan and a detailed report on its implementation every year.

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 11 March 2012, in force since 11 March 2012 (Federal Decree of 17 June 2011, Federal Council Decree of 20 June 2012; AS 2012 3627; BBl 2008 1113 8757, 2011 4825, 2012 6623).

<sup>2\*</sup> With transitional provision.

**Art. 76 Water**

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation shall within the scope of its powers ensure the economic use and the protection of water resources and provide protection against the harmful effects of water.

<sup>2</sup> It shall lay down principles on the conservation and exploitation of water resources, the use of water for the production of energy and for cooling purposes, as well as on other measures affecting the water-cycle.

<sup>3</sup> It shall legislate on water protection, on ensuring appropriate residual flow, on hydraulic engineering and the safety of dams, and on measures that influence precipitation.

<sup>4</sup> The Cantons shall manage their water resources. They may levy charges for the use of water, subject to the limits imposed by federal legislation. The Confederation has the right to use water for its transport operations subject to payment of a charge and compensation.

<sup>5</sup> The Confederation, in consultation with the Cantons concerned, shall decide on rights to international water resources and the charges for them. If Cantons are unable to agree on rights to intercantonal water resources, the Confederation shall decide.

<sup>6</sup> The Confederation shall take account of the concerns of the Cantons where the water originates in fulfilling its duties.

**Art. 77** Forests

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation shall ensure that the forests are able to fulfil their protective, commercial and public amenity functions.

<sup>2</sup> It shall lay down principles on the protection of the forests.

<sup>3</sup> It shall encourage measures for the conservation of the forests.

**Art. 78** Protection of natural and cultural heritage

<sup>1</sup> The protection of natural and cultural heritage is the responsibility of the Cantons.

<sup>2</sup> In the fulfilment of its duties, the Confederation shall take account of concerns for the protection of natural and cultural heritage. It shall protect the countryside and places of architectural, historical, natural or cultural interest; it shall preserve such places intact if required to do so in the public interest.

<sup>3</sup> It may support efforts made for the protection of natural and cultural heritage and acquire or preserve properties of national importance by contract or through compulsory purchase.

<sup>4</sup> It shall legislate on the protection of animal and plant life and on the preservation of their natural habitats and their diversity. It shall protect endangered species from extinction.

<sup>5</sup> Moors and wetlands of special beauty and national importance shall be preserved. No buildings may be built on them and no changes may be made to the land, except for the construction of facilities that serve the protection of the moors or wetlands or their continued use for agricultural purposes.

**Art. 79** Fishing and hunting

The Confederation shall lay down principles on fishing and hunting and in particular on the preservation of the diversity of fish species, wild mammals and birds.

**Art. 80** Protection of animals

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation shall legislate on the protection of animals.

<sup>2</sup> It shall in particular regulate:

- a. the keeping and care of animals;
- b. experiments on animals and procedures carried out on living animals;
- c. the use of animals;
- d. the import of animals and animal products;
- e. the trade in animals and the transport of animals;
- f. the killing of animals.

<sup>3</sup> The enforcement of the regulations is the responsibility of the Cantons, except where the law reserves this to the Confederation.

## Section 5 Public Construction Works and Transport

### Art. 81 Public Construction Works

The Confederation may in the interests of the country as a whole or a large part of it carry out and operate public construction works, or provide support for such construction works.

#### Art. 81a<sup>1</sup> Public transport

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation and the Cantons shall ensure that an adequate range of public transport services is provided on rail, roads, water and by cableway in all regions of the country. In doing so, appropriate account must be taken of the interests of rail freight transport.

<sup>2</sup> The costs of public transport shall be covered to an appropriate extent by the prices paid by users.

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 9 Feb. 2014, in force since 1 Jan. 2016 (Federal Decree of 20 June 2013, Federal Council Decree of 13 May 2014, Federal Council Decree of 2 June 2014, Federal Council Decree of 6 June 2014; AS 2015 645; BBl 2010 6637, 2012 1577, 2013 4725 6518, 2014 4113 4117).

### Art. 82 Road transport

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation shall legislate on road transport.

<sup>2</sup> It shall exercise oversight over roads of national importance; it may decide which transit roads must remain open to traffic.

<sup>3</sup> Public roads may be used free of charge. The Federal Assembly may authorise exceptions.

#### Art. 83<sup>1</sup> Road infrastructure

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation and the cantons shall ensure that there is adequate road infrastructure in all regions of the country.

<sup>2</sup> The Confederation shall ensure the construction of a network of national highways and guarantee that they remain useable. It shall construct, operate and maintain the national highways. It shall bear the costs thereof. It may assign this task wholly or partly to public or private bodies or combined public-private bodies.

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 12 Feb. 2017, in force since 1 Jan. 2018 (Federal Decree of 30 Sept. 2016, Federal Council Decree of 10 Nov. 2016 - AS 2017 6731; BBl 2015 2065, 2016 7587, 2017 3387).

#### Art. 84 Alpine transit traffic <sup>\*1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation shall protect the Alpine region from the negative effects of transit traffic. It shall limit the nuisance caused by transit traffic to a level that is not harmful to people, animals and plants or their habitats.

<sup>2</sup> Transalpine goods traffic shall be transported from border to border by rail. The Federal Council shall take the measures required. Exceptions are permitted only when there is no alternative. They must be specified in detail in a federal act.

<sup>3</sup> The capacity of the transit routes in the Alpine region may not be increased. This does not apply to by-pass roads that reduce the level of transit traffic in towns and villages.

<sup>1\*</sup> With transitional provision

#### Art. 85 Heavy vehicle charge <sup>\*1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation may levy a capacity or mileage-related charge on heavy vehicle traffic where such traffic creates public costs that are not covered by other charges or taxes.

<sup>2</sup> The net revenue from the charge shall be used to cover the costs incurred in connection with overland transport.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>3</sup> The Cantons are entitled to a share of the net revenue. In the assessment of the shares allocated, the particular consequences that levying the charge have for mountainous and remote regions shall be taken into account.

<sup>1\*</sup> With transitional provision

<sup>2</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 9 Feb. 2014, in force since 1 Jan. 2016 (Federal Decree of 20 June 2013, Federal Council Decree of 13 May 2014, Federal Council Decree of 2 June 2014, Federal Council Decree of 6 June 2014; AS **2015** 645; BBl **2010** 6637, **2012** 1577, **2013** 4725 6518, **2014** 4113 4117).

**Art. 85a<sup>1</sup>** Charge for using the national highways

The Confederation shall levy a charge for the use of the national highways by motor vehicles and trailers that are not liable to pay the heavy vehicle charge.

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 12 Feb. 2017, in force since 1 Jan. 2018 (Federal Decree of 30 Sept. 2016, Federal Council Decree of 10 Nov. 2016 - AS **2017** 6731; BBl **2015** 2065, **2016** 7587, **2017** 3387).

**Art. 86<sup>1</sup>** Use of charges for tasks and costs in connection with road transport<sup>\*2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A fund shall be set up to finance the national highways and contributions towards measures to improve the road transport infrastructure in cities and urban areas.

<sup>2</sup> The following monies shall be allocated to the fund:

- a. the net proceeds of the national highways charge in accordance with Article 85a;
- b. the net proceeds of the special consumption tax in accordance with Article 131 paragraph 1 letter d;
- c. the net proceeds of the surcharge in accordance with Article 131 paragraph 2 letter a;
- d. the net proceeds of the charge in accordance with Article 131 paragraph 2 letter b;
- e. a percentage of the net proceeds from the consumption tax on all motor fuels, with the exception of aviation fuels, in accordance with Article 131 paragraph 1 letter e; this shall amount to 9 per cent each of the net proceeds under letter c and 9 per cent of one half of the net proceeds of the consumption tax on all motor fuels, with the exception of aviation fuels, but no more than 310 million francs per year; the indexation of this amount shall be regulated by law;
- f. in general, 10 per cent of the net proceeds of consumption tax on all motor fuels, with the exception of aviation fuels, in accordance with Article 131 paragraph 1 letter e;
- g.<sup>3</sup> ...
- h.

other monies allocated by law in connection with road transport.

<sup>3</sup> A special finance programme shall be administered for the following tasks and costs in connection with road transport:

- a. contributions towards measures to promote combined transport and the transport of motor vehicles and drivers;
- b. contributions towards the cost of main roads;
- c. contributions towards protective structures to prevent natural disasters and measures to protect the environment and countryside from the effects of road traffic;
- d. general contributions towards the costs incurred by the Cantons for roads open to motor vehicles;
- e. contributions to Cantons without national highways;
- f. research and administration;
- g.<sup>4</sup> ...

<sup>4</sup> The special finance programme shall be allocated one half of the net proceeds of the consumption tax on all motor fuels, with the exception of aviation fuels, in accordance with Article 131 paragraph 1 letter e, under deduction of the monies under paragraph 2 letter e.

<sup>5</sup> Where the special finance programme has a proven need and in order to form appropriate reserves in the special finance programme, proceeds from the consumption tax in accordance with Article 131 paragraph 1 letter d shall be allocated to the special finance programme instead of the fund.

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 12 Feb. 2017, in force since 1 Jan. 2018 (Federal Decree of 30 Sept. 2016, Federal Council Decree of 10 Nov. 2016 - AS 2017 6731; BBl 2015 2065, 2016 7587, 2017 3387).

<sup>2\*</sup> With transitional provision.

<sup>3</sup> Comes into force on 1 Jan. 2020.

<sup>4</sup> Comes into force on 1 Jan. 2020.

#### **Art. 87** Railways and other modes of transport<sup>\*1</sup>

The legislation on rail transport, cableways, shipping, aviation and space travel is the responsibility of the Confederation.

<sup>1\*</sup> With transitional provision

#### **Art. 87a**<sup>1</sup> Railway infrastructure<sup>\*2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation shall bear the principal burden of financing railway infrastructure.

<sup>2</sup> Railway infrastructure shall be financed from a fund. The following resources shall be allocated to the fund:

- a. a maximum of two thirds of the revenue from the heavy vehicle charge under Article 85;

**b.**

the revenue from the increase in value added tax under Article 130 paragraph 3<sup>bis</sup>;

**c.**

2.0 per cent of the receipts from the direct federal taxation of private individuals;

**d.**

2,300 million francs each year from the general federal budget; the indexation of this amount shall be regulated by law.

<sup>3</sup> The Cantons shall participate appropriately in the financing of railway infrastructure. The details shall be regulated by law.

<sup>4</sup> The law may provide for additional financing from third parties.

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 9 Feb. 2014, in force since 1 Jan. 2016 (Federal Decree of 20 June 2013, Federal Council Decree of 13 May 2014, Federal Council Decree of 2 June 2014, Federal Council Decree of 6 June 2014; AS 2015 645; BBI 2010 6637, 2012 1577, 2013 4725 6518, 2014 4113 4117).

<sup>2\*</sup> With transitional provision.

**Art. 87b<sup>1</sup>** Use of charges for tasks and costs in connection with air traffic

One half of the net proceeds of the consumption tax on aviation fuels and the surcharge on the consumption tax on aviation fuels shall be used for the following tasks and costs in connection with air traffic:

**a.**

contributions towards environmental protection measures made necessary by air traffic;

**b.**

contributions towards security measures to protect against unlawful acts against air traffic, and in particular against terrorist attacks and the hijacking of aircraft, insofar as such measures are not the responsibility of national authorities;

**c.**

contributions towards measures to ensure a high technical level of safety in air traffic.

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 12 Feb. 2017, in force since 1 Jan. 2018 (Federal Decree of 30 Sept. 2016, Federal Council Decree of 10 Nov. 2016 - AS 2017 6731; BBI 2015 2065, 2016 7587, 2017 3387).

**Art. 88** Footpaths and hiking trails

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation shall lay down principles with regard to the network of footpaths and hiking trails.

<sup>2</sup> It may support and coordinate cantonal measures to construct and maintain such networks.

<sup>3</sup> It shall take account of the network of footpaths and hiking trails in the fulfilment of its duties and shall replace paths and trails that it has to close.

## Section 6 Energy and Communications

**Art. 89** Energy policy

<sup>1</sup> Within the scope of their powers, the Confederation and Cantons shall endeavour to ensure a sufficient, diverse, safe, economic and environmentally sustainable energy supply as well as the economic and efficient use of energy.

<sup>2</sup> The Confederation shall establish principles on the use of local and renewable energy sources and on the economic and efficient use of energy.

<sup>3</sup> The Confederation shall legislate on the use of energy by installations, vehicles and appliances. It shall encourage the development of energy technologies, in particular in the fields of saving energy and the renewable energy sources.

<sup>4</sup> The Cantons shall be primarily responsible for measures relating to the use of energy in buildings.

<sup>5</sup> The Confederation shall take account in its energy policy of the efforts made by the Cantons, the communes and the business community; it shall take account of the conditions in the individual regions of the country and the limitations of what is economically feasible.

**Art. 90 Nuclear energy**<sup>\*1</sup>

The Confederation is responsible for legislation in the field of nuclear energy.

<sup>1\*</sup> With transitional provision

**Art. 91 Transport of energy**

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation shall legislate on the transport and the supply of electrical energy.

<sup>2</sup> The Confederation is responsible for legislation on transmission and distribution systems for the transport of liquid or gaseous fuels.

**Art. 92 Postal and telecommunications services**

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation is responsible for postal and telecommunications services.

<sup>2</sup> The Confederation shall ensure the adequate, universal and reasonably priced provision of postal and telecommunications services in all regions of the country. The rates shall be fixed according to standard principles.

**Art. 93 Radio and television**

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation is responsible for legislation on radio and television as well as on other forms of public broadcasting of features and information.

<sup>2</sup> Radio and television shall contribute to education and cultural development, to the free shaping of opinion and to entertainment. They shall take account of the particularities of the country and the needs of the Cantons. They shall present events accurately and allow a diversity of opinions to be expressed appropriately.

<sup>3</sup> The independence of radio and television as well as their autonomy in deciding on programming is guaranteed.

<sup>4</sup> Account must be taken of the role and duties of other media, in particular the press.

<sup>5</sup> Complaints about programmes may be submitted to an independent complaints authority.

## Section 7 The Economy

**Art. 94 Principles of the economic system**

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation and the Cantons shall abide by the principle of economic freedom.

<sup>2</sup> They shall safeguard the interests of the Swiss economy as a whole and, together with the private sector, shall contribute to the welfare and economic security of the population.

<sup>3</sup> They shall endeavour within the scope of their powers to create favourable general conditions for the private sector.

<sup>4</sup> Any divergence from the principle of economic freedom, and in particular measures designed to restrain competition, shall be permitted only if they are provided for in the Federal Constitution or based on cantonal monopoly rights.

**Art. 95 Professional activities in the private sector**<sup>\*1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation may legislate on professional activities in the private sector.

<sup>2</sup> It shall seek to create a unified Swiss economic area. It shall guarantee that persons with an academic qualification or with a federal or cantonal educational qualification or an educational qualification recognised by a Canton are able to practise their profession throughout Switzerland.

<sup>3</sup> For the protection of the economy, private property and shareholders, and to guarantee sustainable corporate governance, the law shall regulate Swiss companies limited by shares listed on stock exchanges in Switzerland or abroad in accordance with the following principles:

**a.**

the general meeting votes on an annual basis on the total amount of all remuneration (money and the value of benefits in kind) given to the board of directors, the executive board and the board of advisors. It elects on an annual basis the president of the board of directors, the individual members of the board of directors and the remuneration committee, and the independent representatives of voting rights. Pension funds vote in the interests of their insured members and disclose how they have voted. Shareholders may vote remotely online; they may not be represented by a governing officer of the company or by a custodian bank;

**b.**

the governing officers may not be given severance or similar payments, advance payments, bonuses for company purchases and sales, additional contracts as consultants to or employees of other companies in the group. The management of the company may not be delegated to a legal entity;

**c.**

the articles of association regulate the amount of credits, loans and pensions payable to governing officers, their profit-sharing and equity participation plans and the number of mandates they may accept outside the group, as well as the duration of employment contracts of members of the executive board;

**d.**

Persons violating the provisions under letters a-c are liable to a custodial sentence not exceeding three years and to a monetary penalty not exceeding six times their annual remuneration.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1\*</sup> With transitional provision

<sup>2</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 3 March 2013, in force since 3 March 2013 (Federal Council Decree of 15 Nov. 2012 and 30 April 2013; AS 2013 1303; BBl 2006 8755, 2008 2577, 2009 299, 2012 9219, 2013 3129).

**Art. 96 Competition policy**

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation shall legislate against the damaging effects in economic or social terms of cartels and other restraints on competition.

<sup>2</sup> It shall take measures:

a.

to prevent abuses in price maintenance by dominant undertakings and private and public law organisations;

b.

against unfair competition.

#### **Art. 97** Consumer protection

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation shall take measures to protect consumers.

<sup>2</sup> It shall legislate on the legal remedies available to consumer organisations. These organisations shall have the same rights under the federal legislation on unfair competition as professional and trade associations.

<sup>3</sup> The Cantons shall provide a conciliation procedure or a simple and rapid court procedure for claims of up to a certain sum. The Federal Council determines this sum.

#### **Art. 98** Banks and insurance companies

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation shall legislate on the banking and stock exchange system; in doing so, it shall take account of the special function and role of the cantonal banks.

<sup>2</sup> It may legislate on financial services in other fields.

<sup>3</sup> It shall legislate on private insurance.

#### **Art. 99** Monetary policy

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation is responsible for money and currency; the Confederation has the exclusive right to issue coins and banknotes.

<sup>2</sup> The Swiss National Bank, as an independent central bank, shall pursue a monetary policy that serves the overall interests of the country; it shall be administered with the cooperation and under the supervision of the Confederation.

<sup>3</sup> The Swiss National Bank shall create sufficient currency reserves from its revenues; part of these reserves shall be held in gold.

<sup>4</sup> A minimum of two thirds of the net profits made by the Swiss National Bank shall be allocated to the Cantons.

#### **Art. 100** Economic policy

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation shall take measures to achieve balanced economic development, and in particular to prevent and combat unemployment and inflation.

<sup>2</sup> It shall take account of economic development in individual regions of the country. It shall cooperate with the Cantons and the business community.

<sup>3</sup> In the field of money and banking, in foreign economic affairs and in the field of public finance, the Confederation may if necessary depart from the principle of economic freedom.

<sup>4</sup> The Confederation, the Cantons and the communes shall take account of the economic situation in their revenue and expenditure policies.

<sup>5</sup> To stabilise the economic situation, the Confederation may temporarily levy surcharges or grant rebates on federal taxes and duties. The accumulated funds must be held in reserve; following their release, direct taxes shall be individually refunded, and indirect taxes used to grant rebates or to create jobs.

<sup>6</sup> The Confederation may oblige businesses to accumulate reserves for the creation of jobs; it shall for this purpose grant tax concessions and may require the Cantons to do the same. Following the release of the reserves, businesses shall be free to decide how the funds are applied within the scope of the uses permitted by law.

**Art. 101** Foreign economic policy

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation shall safeguard the interests of the Swiss economy abroad.

<sup>2</sup> In special cases, it may take measures to protect the domestic economy. In doing so, it may if necessary depart from the principle of economic freedom.

**Art. 102** National economic supply<sup>\*1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation shall ensure that the country is supplied with essential goods and services in the event of the threat of politico-military strife or war, or of severe shortages that the economy cannot by itself counteract. It shall take precautionary measures to address these matters.

<sup>2</sup> In exercising its powers under this Article, it may if necessary depart from the principle of economic freedom.

<sup>1\*</sup> With transitional provision

**Art. 103** Structural policy<sup>\*1</sup>

The Confederation may support regions of the country that are under economic threat and promote specific economic sectors and professions, if reasonable self-help measures are insufficient to ensure their existence. In exercising its powers under this Article, it may if necessary depart from the principle of economic freedom.

<sup>1\*</sup> With transitional provision

**Art. 104** Agriculture

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation shall ensure that agricultural sector, by means of a sustainable and market oriented production policy, makes an essential contribution towards:

- a. the reliable provision of the population with foodstuffs;
- b. the conservation of natural resources and the upkeep of the countryside;
- c. decentralised population settlement of the country.

<sup>2</sup> In addition to the self-help measures that can reasonably be expected in the agriculture sector and if necessary in derogation from the principle of economic freedom, the Confederation shall support farms that cultivate the land.

<sup>3</sup> The Confederation shall organise measures in such a manner that the agricultural sector fulfils its multi-functional duties. It has in particular the following powers and duties:

- a. supplementing revenues from agriculture by means of direct subsidies in order to achieve of fair and adequate remuneration for the services provided, subject

to proof of compliance with ecological requirements;

**b.**

encouraging by means of economically advantageous incentives methods of production that are specifically near-natural and respectful of both the environment and livestock;

**c.**

legislating on declarations of origin, quality, production methods and processing procedures for foodstuffs;

**d.**

protecting the environment against the detrimental effects of the excessive use of fertilisers, chemicals and other auxiliary agents;

**e.**

at its discretion, encouraging agricultural research, counselling and education and subsidise investments;

**f.**

at its discretion, legislating on the consolidation of agricultural property holdings.

<sup>4</sup> For these purposes, the Confederation shall provide both funds earmarked for the agricultural sector and general federal funds.

#### **Art. 104a<sup>1</sup>** Food security

In order to guarantee the supply of food to the population, the Confederation shall create the conditions required for:

**a.**

safeguarding the basis for agricultural production, and agricultural land in particular;

**b.**

food production that is adapted to local conditions and which uses natural resources efficiently;

**c.**

an agriculture and food sector that responds to market requirements;

**d.**

cross-border trade relations that contribute to the sustainable development of the agriculture and food sector;

**e.**

using food in a way that conserves natural resources.

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 24. Sept. 2017, in force since 24 Sept. 2017 (Federal Decree of 14 March 2017, Federal Council Decree of 30 Nov. 2017 - AS 2017 6735; BBl 2014 6135, 2015 5753, 2017 2495 7829).

#### **Art. 105** Alcohol

The legislation on the manufacture, import, rectification and sale of alcohol obtained by distillation is the responsibility of the Confederation. The Confederation shall in particular take account of the harmful effects of alcohol consumption.

#### **Art. 106<sup>1</sup>** Gambling

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation shall legislate on gambling; in doing so it shall take account of cantonal interests.

<sup>2</sup> A licence from the Confederation is required in order to establish and operate a casino. In granting such a licence, the Confederation shall take account of regional circumstances. It shall levy a revenue-related tax on casinos; this tax must not exceed 80 per cent of the gross revenues from gambling. It shall be used to fund the Old-age, Survivors' and Invalidity Insurance.

<sup>3</sup> The cantons are responsible for granting licences for and supervising the following:

a.

gambling activities that are available to an unlimited number of people, are offered at more than one location and which are based on the same random draw or a similar procedure; the foregoing does not apply to the jackpot systems in casinos;

b.

betting on sports;

c.

games of skill.

<sup>4</sup> Paragraphs 2 and 3 also apply to telecommunications-based gambling.

<sup>5</sup> The Confederation and the cantons shall take account of the dangers of gambling. They shall ensure that appropriate protection is provided through legislation and supervisory measures and in doing so shall take account of the different characteristics of the games and the form and location of the gambling opportunity offered.

<sup>6</sup> The cantons shall ensure that the net revenues from gambling in accordance with paragraph 3 letters a and b are used in their entirety for charitable purposes, in particular in the fields of culture, social projects and sport.

<sup>7</sup> The Confederation and the cantons shall coordinate their efforts to fulfil their tasks. To this end the law shall establish a joint body, one half of whose members shall be from the federal implementing bodies and the other half from the cantonal implementing bodies.

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 11 March 2012, in force since 11 March 2012 (Federal Decree of 29 Sept. 2011, Federal Council Decree of 20 June 2012; AS 2012 3629; BBl 2009 7019, 2010 7961, 2012 6623).

#### **Art. 107 Weapons and war material**

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation shall legislate against misuse of weapons and their accessories and ammunition.

<sup>2</sup> It shall legislate on the manufacture, procurement and sale of war material as well as the import, export and transit of such material.

### **Section 8 Housing, Employment, Social Security and Health**

#### **Art. 108 Construction of housing and home ownership**

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation shall encourage the construction of housing, the acquisition of the ownership of apartments and houses for the personal use of private individuals, as well as the activities of developers and organisations involved in the construction of public utility housing.

<sup>2</sup> It shall encourage in particular the acquisition and development of land for the construction of housing, increased efficiency in construction and the reduction of construction and housing costs.

<sup>3</sup> It may legislate on the development of land for housing construction and on increasing the efficiency of construction.

<sup>4</sup> In doing so, it shall take particular account of the interests of families, elderly persons, persons on low incomes and persons with disabilities.

**Art. 109** Landlord and tenant

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation shall legislate against abuses in tenancy matters, and in particular against unfair rents, as well as on the procedure for challenging unlawfully terminated leases and the limited extension of leases.

<sup>2</sup> It may legislate to declare framework leases to be generally applicable. Such leases may be declared generally applicable only if they take appropriate account of the justified interests of minorities and regional particularities, and respect the principle of equality before the law.

**Art. 110** Employment\*<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation may legislate on:

- a. employee protection;
- b. relations between employer and employee, and in particular on common regulations on operational and professional matters;
- c. recruitment services;
- d. the declaration of collective employment agreements to be generally applicable.

<sup>2</sup> Collective employment agreements may be declared generally applicable only if they take appropriate account of the justified interests of minorities and regional particularities, and they respect the principle of equality before the law and the right to form professional associations.

<sup>3</sup> August 1 is the National Day of the Swiss Confederation. In terms of employment law, it is regarded as equivalent to a Sunday, with equivalent rights to pay.

<sup>1\*</sup> With transitional provision

**Art. 111** Old-age, survivors' and invalidity pension provision

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation shall take measures to ensure adequate financial provision for the elderly, surviving spouses and children, and persons with disabilities. These shall be based on three pillars, namely the Federal Old-age, Survivors' and Invalidity Insurance, the occupational pension scheme and private pension schemes.

<sup>2</sup> The Confederation shall ensure that the Federal Old-age, Survivors' and Invalidity Insurance and the occupational pension scheme are able to fulfil their purpose at all times.

<sup>3</sup> It may require the Cantons to exempt institutions of the Federal Old-age, Survivors' and Invalidity Insurance and the occupational pension scheme from liability to pay tax and to grant insured persons and their employers tax relief on contributions and reversionary rights.

<sup>4</sup> In cooperation with the Cantons, it shall encourage private pension schemes, in particular through measures relating to taxation policy and the policy of promoting property ownership.

**Art. 112 Old-age, Survivors' and Invalidity Insurance**

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation shall legislate on the Old-age, Survivors and Invalidity Insurance.

<sup>2</sup> In doing so, it shall adhere to the following principles:

a.

the insurance is compulsory;

a<sup>bis.1</sup>

it provides cash and non-cash benefits;

b.

pensions must be sufficient to cover basic living expenses adequately;

c.

the maximum pension must not be more than twice the minimum pension;

d.

pensions must as a minimum be adjusted in line with price trends.

<sup>3</sup> The insurance is funded:

a.

through contributions from those insured, whereby employers must pay one half of the contributions payable by their employees;

b.<sup>2</sup>

through subsidies from the Confederation.

<sup>4</sup> The subsidies from the Confederation may not exceed one half of the disbursements made under the scheme.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>5</sup> The subsidies from the Confederation shall in the first place be funded from the net proceeds of the tax on tobacco, the tax on distilled spirits and the tax on the revenues from gaming houses.

<sup>6</sup> ...<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 28 Nov 2004, in force since 1 Jan. 2008 (Federal Council Decree of 3 Oct. 2003, Federal Council Decree of 26 Jan. 2005, Federal Council Decree of 7 Nov. 2007; AS **2007** 5765; BBI **2002** 2291, **2003** 6591, **2005** 951).

<sup>2</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 28 Nov. 2004, in force since 1 Jan. 2008 (Federal Council Decree of 3 Oct. 2003, Federal Council Decree of 26 Jan. 2005, Federal Council Decree of 7 Nov. 2007; AS **2007** 5765; BBI **2002** 2291, **2003** 6591, **2005** 951).

<sup>3</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 28 Nov. 2004, in force since 1 Jan. 2008 (Federal Council Decree of 3 Oct. 2003, Federal Council Decree of 26 Jan. 2005, Federal Council Decree of 7 Nov. 2007; AS **2007** 5765; BBI **2002** 2291, **2003** 6591, **2005** 951).

<sup>4</sup> Repealed by the popular vote on 28 Nov 2004, with effect from 1 Jan. 2008 (Federal Council Decree of 3 Oct 2003, Federal Council Decree of 26 Jan. 2005, Federal Council Decree of 7 Nov. 2007; AS **2007** 5765; BBI **2002** 2291, **2003** 6591, **2005** 951).

**Art. 112a<sup>1</sup> Supplementary benefits**

<sup>1</sup> Confederation and Cantons shall pay supplementary benefits to people whose basic living expenses are not covered by benefits under the Old-age, Survivors and Invalidity Insurance.

<sup>2</sup> The law determines the extent of the supplementary benefits as well as the tasks and responsibilities of the Confederation and Cantons.

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 28 Nov. 2004, in force since 1 Jan. 2008 (Federal Council Decree of 3 Oct. 2003, Federal Council Decree of 26 Jan. 2005, Federal Council Decree of 7 Nov. 2007; AS **2007** 5765; BBI **2002** 2291, **2003** 6591, **2005** 951).

**Art. 112b**<sup>1</sup>Promoting the rehabilitation of people eligible for invalidity benefits\*<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation shall encourage the rehabilitation of people eligible for invalidity benefits by providing cash and non-cash benefits. For this purpose, it may use resources from the Invalidity Insurance.

<sup>2</sup> The Cantons shall encourage the rehabilitation of people eligible for invalidity benefits, in particular through contributions to the construction and running of institutions that provide accommodation and work.

<sup>3</sup> The law determines the goals of rehabilitation and the principles and criteria.

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 28 Nov 2004, in force since 1 Jan. 2008 (Federal Council Decree of 3 Oct 2003, Federal Council Decree of 26 Jan. 2005, Federal Council Decree of 7 Nov. 2007; AS **2007** 5765; BBI **2002** 2291, **2003** 6591, **2005** 951).

<sup>2\*</sup> With transitional provision.

**Art. 112c**<sup>1</sup>Aid for elderly people and people with disabilities\*<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Cantons shall provide for assistance and care in the home for elderly people and people with disabilities.

<sup>2</sup> The Confederation shall support national efforts for the benefit of elderly people and people with disabilities. For this purpose, it may use resources from the Old-age, Survivors and Invalidity Insurance.

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 28 Nov 2004, in force since 1 Jan. 2008 (Federal Council Decree of 3 Oct 2003, Federal Council Decree of 26 Jan. 2005, Federal Council Decree of 7 Nov. 2007; AS **2007** 5765; BBI **2002** 2291, **2003** 6591, **2005** 951).

<sup>2\*</sup> With transitional provision.

**Art. 113** Occupational pension scheme\*<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation shall legislate for an occupational pension scheme.

<sup>2</sup> In doing so, it shall adhere to the following principles:

- a. the occupational pension scheme, together with the Old-age, Survivors' and Invalidity Insurance, enables the insured person to maintain his or her previous lifestyle in an appropriate manner.
- b. the occupational pension scheme is compulsory for employees; the law may provide for exceptions.
- c. employers shall insure their employees with a pension institution; if required, the Confederation shall make it possible for employees to be insured with a federal pension institution.
- d. self-employed persons may insure themselves on a voluntary basis with a pension institution.
- e.

for specific groups of self-employed persons, the Confederation may declare the occupational pension scheme to be compulsory, either in general terms or for individual risks only.

<sup>3</sup> The occupation pension scheme is funded from the contributions of those insured, whereby employers must pay a minimum of one half of the contributions of their employees.

<sup>4</sup> Pension schemes must satisfy the minimum requirements under federal law; the Confederation may provide for national measures to resolve particular difficulties.

<sup>1\*</sup> With transitional provision

#### **Art. 114 Unemployment insurance**

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation shall legislate on unemployment insurance.

<sup>2</sup> In doing so, it shall adhere to the following principles:

**a.**

the insurance guarantees appropriate compensation for loss of earnings and supports measures to prevent and combat unemployment;

**b.**

the insurance is compulsory for employees; the law may provide for exceptions;

**c.**

self-employed persons may insure themselves voluntarily.

<sup>3</sup> The insurance is funded by the contributions from those insured, whereby one half of the contributions of employees shall be paid by their employers.

<sup>4</sup> Confederation and Cantons shall provide subsidies in extraordinary circumstances.

<sup>5</sup> The Confederation may enact regulations on social assistance for the unemployed.

#### **Art. 115 Support for persons in need**

Persons in need shall be supported by their Canton of residence. The Confederation regulates exceptions and powers.

#### **Art. 116 Child allowances and maternity insurance**

<sup>1</sup> In the fulfilment of its duties, the Confederation shall take account of the needs of families. It may support measures for the protection of families.

<sup>2</sup> It may issue regulations on child allowances and operate a federal family allowances compensation fund.

<sup>3</sup> It shall establish a maternity insurance scheme. It may also require persons who cannot benefit from that insurance to make contributions.

<sup>4</sup> The Confederation may declare participation in a family allowances compensation fund and the maternity insurance scheme to be compulsory, either in general terms or for individual sections of the population, and make its subsidies dependent on appropriate subsidies being made by the Cantons.

#### **Art. 117 Health and accident insurance**

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation shall legislate on health and accident insurance.

<sup>2</sup> It may declare health and the accident insurance to be compulsory, either in general terms or for individual sections of the population.

#### **Art. 117a<sup>1</sup> Primary medical care**

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation and the Cantons shall within the scope of their powers ensure the adequate provision of high quality primary medical care that is accessible to all. They shall recognise and promote family medicine as an essential component of primary care.

<sup>2</sup> The Confederation shall legislate on:

- a. basic and continuing education and training for family medicine professions and the requirements for practising these professions;
- b. appropriate remuneration for family medicine services.

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 18 May 2014, in force since 18 May 2014 (Federal Decree of 19 Sept. 2013, Federal Council Decree of 18 Aug. 2014; AS 2014 2769; BBI 2010 2939, 2011 7553, 2013 7347, 2014 6349).

**Art. 118** Health protection

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation shall, within the limits of its powers, take measures for the protection of health.

<sup>2</sup> It shall legislate on:

- a. the use of foodstuffs as well as therapeutic products, narcotics, organisms, chemicals and items that may be dangerous to health;
- b. the combating of communicable, widespread or particularly dangerous human and animal diseases;
- c. protection against ionising radiation.

**Art. 118a**<sup>1</sup> Complementary medicine

The Confederation and the Cantons shall within the scope of their powers ensure that consideration is given to complementary medicine.

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 17 May 2009 (Federal Decree of 3 Oct. 2008, Federal Council Decree of 21 Oct. 2009; AS 2009 5325; BBI 2005 6001, 2006 7591, 2008 8229, 2009 7539).

**Art. 118b**<sup>1</sup> Research on human beings

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation shall legislate on research on human beings where this is required in order to protect their dignity and privacy. In doing so, it shall preserve the freedom to conduct research and shall take account of the importance of research to health and society.

<sup>2</sup> The Confederation shall adhere to the following principles in relation to biological and medical research involving human beings:

- a. It is a requirement for any research project that the participants or their legal representatives have given their informed consent. The law may provide for exceptions. A refusal is binding in every case.
- b. The risks and stress for the participants must not be disproportionate to the benefits of the research project.

**c.**

A research project involving persons lacking the capacity to consent may be conducted only if findings of equal value cannot be obtained from research involving persons who have the capacity to consent. If the research project is not expected to bring any immediate benefit to the persons lacking the capacity to consent, the risks and stress must be minimal.

**d.**

An independent assessment of the research project must have determined that the safety of the participants is guaranteed.

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 7 March 2010, in force since 7 March 2010 (Federal Decree of 25 Sept. 2009, Federal Council Decree of 15 April 2010; AS 2010 1569; BBl 2007 6713, 2009 6649, 2010 2625).

**Art. 119** Reproductive medicine and gene technology involving human beings

<sup>1</sup> Human beings shall be protected against the misuse of reproductive medicine and gene technology.

<sup>2</sup> The Confederation shall legislate on the use of human reproductive and genetic material. In doing so, it shall ensure the protection of human dignity, privacy and the family and shall adhere in particular to the following principles:

**a.**

All forms of cloning and interference with the genetic material of human reproductive cells and embryos are unlawful.

**b.**

Non-human reproductive and genetic material may neither be introduced into nor combined with human reproductive material.

**c.<sup>1</sup>**

The procedures for medically-assisted reproduction may be used only if infertility or the risk of transmitting a serious illness cannot otherwise be overcome, but not in order to conceive a child with specific characteristics or to further research; the fertilisation of human egg cells outside a woman's body is permitted only under the conditions laid down by the law; no more human egg cells may be developed into embryos outside a woman's body than are required for medically-assisted reproduction.

**d.**

The donation of embryos and all forms of surrogate motherhood are unlawful.

**e.**

The trade in human reproductive material and in products obtained from embryos is prohibited.

**f.**

The genetic material of a person may be analysed, registered or made public only with the consent of the person concerned or if the law so provides.

**g.**

Every person shall have access to data relating to their ancestry.

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 14 June 2015, in force since 14 June 2015 (Federal Decree of 12 Dec. 2014, Federal Council Decree of 21 Aug. 2015; AS 2015 2887; BBl 2013 5853, 2014 9675, 2015 6313).

**Art. 119a<sup>1</sup>** Transplant medicine

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation shall legislate in the field of organ, tissue and cell transplants. In doing so, it shall ensure the protection of human dignity, privacy and health.

<sup>2</sup> It shall in particular lay down criteria for the fair allocation of organs.

<sup>3</sup> Any donation of human organs, tissue and cells must be free of charge. The trade in human organs is prohibited.

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 7 Feb. 1999 (Federal Decree of 26 June 1998, Federal Council Decree of 23 March 1999; AS 1999 1341; BBl 1997 III 653, 1998 3473, 1999 2912 8768).

**Art. 120 Non-human gene technology**<sup>\*1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Human beings and their environment shall be protected against the misuse of gene technology.

<sup>2</sup> The Confederation shall legislate on the use of reproductive and genetic material from animals, plants and other organisms. In doing so, it shall take account of the dignity of living beings as well as the safety of human beings, animals and the environment, and shall protect the genetic diversity of animal and plant species.

<sup>1\*</sup> With transitional provision

**Section 9 Residence and Permanent Settlement of Foreign Nationals**

**Art. 121 Legislation on foreign nationals and asylum**<sup>\*12</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation is responsible for legislation on entry to and exit from Switzerland, the residence and the permanent settlement of foreign nationals and on the granting of asylum.

<sup>2</sup> Foreign nationals may be expelled from Switzerland if they pose a risk to the security of the country.

<sup>3</sup> Irrespective of their status under the law on foreign nationals, foreign nationals shall lose their right of residence and all other legal rights to remain in Switzerland if they:

**a.**

are convicted with legal binding effect of an offence of intentional homicide, rape or any other serious sexual offence, any other violent offence such as robbery, the offences of trafficking in human beings or in drugs, or a burglary offence; or

**b.**

have improperly claimed social insurance or social assistance benefits.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>4</sup> The legislature shall define the offences covered by paragraph 3 in more detail. It may add additional offences.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Foreign nationals who lose their right of residence and all other legal rights to remain in Switzerland in accordance with paragraphs 3 and 4 must be deported from Switzerland by the competent authority and must be made subject to a ban on entry of from 5-15 years. In the event of reoffending, the ban on entry is for 20 years.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Any person who fails to comply with the ban on entry or otherwise enters Switzerland illegally commits an offence. The legislature shall issue the relevant provisions.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1\*</sup> With transitional provision.

<sup>2</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 9 Feb. 2014, in force since 9 Feb. 2014 (Federal Decree of 27 Sept. 2013, Federal Council Decree of 13 May 2014; AS **2014** 1391; BBI **2011** 6269, **2012** 3869, **2013** 291 7351, **2014** 4117).

<sup>3</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 28 Nov. 2010, in force since 28 Nov. 2010 (Federal Decree of 18 June 2010, Federal Council Decree of 17 March 2011; AS **2011** 1199; BBI **2008** 1927, **2009** 5097, **2010** 4241, **2011** 2771).

<sup>4</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 28 Nov. 2010, in force since 28 Nov. 2010 (Federal Decree of 18 June 2010, Federal Council Decree of 17 March 2011; AS **2011** 1199; BBI **2008** 1927, **2009** 5097, **2010** 4241, **2011** 2771).

<sup>5</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 28 Nov. 2010, in force since 28 Nov. 2010 (Federal Decree of 18 June 2010, Federal Council Decree of 17 March 2011; AS **2011** 1199; BBI **2008** 1927, **2009** 5097, **2010** 4241, **2011** 2771).

<sup>6</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 28 Nov. 2010, in force since 28 Nov. 2010 (Federal Decree of 18 June 2010, Federal Council Decree of 17 March 2011; AS **2011** 1199; BBI **2008** 1927, **2009** 5097, **2010** 4241, **2011** 2771).

### **Art. 121a**<sup>1</sup>Control of immigration\*<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Switzerland shall control the immigration of foreign nationals autonomously.

<sup>2</sup> The number of residence permits for foreign nationals in Switzerland shall be restricted by annual quantitative limits and quotas. The quantitative limits apply to all permits issued under legislation on foreign nationals, including those related to asylum matters. The right to permanent residence, family reunification and social benefits may be restricted.

<sup>3</sup> The annual quantitative limits and quotas for foreign nationals in gainful employment must be determined according to Switzerland's general economic interests, while giving priority to Swiss citizens; the limits and quotas must include cross-border commuters. The decisive criteria for granting residence permits are primarily a application from an employer, ability to integrate, and adequate, independent means of subsistence.

<sup>4</sup> No international agreements may be concluded that breach this Article.

<sup>5</sup> The law shall regulate the details.

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 9 Feb. 2014, in force since 9 Feb. 2014 (Federal Decree of 27 Sept. 2013, Federal Council Decree of 13 May 2014; AS **2014** 1391; BBI **2011** 6269, **2012** 3869, **2013** 291 7351, **2014** 4117).

<sup>2\*</sup> With transitional provision.

## Section 10 Civil Law, Criminal Law, Weights and Measures

### **Art. 122**<sup>1</sup>Civil law

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation is responsible for legislation in the field of civil law and the law of civil procedure.

<sup>2</sup> The Cantons are responsible for the organisation of the courts and the administration of justice in civil matters, unless the law provides otherwise.

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 12 March 2000, in force since 1 Jan. 2007 (Federal Decree of 8 Oct. 1999, Federal Council Decree of 17 May 2000, Federal Decree of 8 March 2005; AS **2002** 3148, **2006** 1059; BBI **1997** I 1, **1999** 8633, **2000** 2990, **2001** 4202).

**Art. 123<sup>1</sup>**Criminal law

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation is responsible for legislation in the field of criminal law and the law of criminal procedure.

<sup>2</sup> The Cantons are responsible for the organisation of the courts, the administration of justice in criminal cases as well as for the execution of penalties and measures, unless the law provides otherwise.

<sup>3</sup> The Confederation may issue regulations on the execution of penalties and measures. It may grant subsidies to the Cantons for:

- a. the construction of penal institutions;
- b. improvements in the execution of penalties and measures;
- c. institutions that conduct educative measures for the benefit of children, adolescents and young adults.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 12 March 2000, in force since 1 April 2003 (Federal Council Decree of 8 Oct. 1999, Federal Council Decree of 17 May 2000, Federal Council Decree of 24 Sept. 2002; AS **2002** 3148; BBI **1997** I 1, **1999** 8633, **2000** 2990, **2001** 4202).

<sup>2</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 28 Nov 2004, in force since 1 Jan. 2008 (Federal Council Decree of 3 Oct 2003, Federal Council Decree of 26 Jan. 2005, Federal Council Decree of 7 Nov. 2007; AS **2007** 5765; BBI **2002** 2291, **2003** 6591, **2005** 951).

**Art. 123a<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> If a sex offender or violent offender is regarded in the reports required for sentencing as being extremely dangerous and his or her condition assessed as untreatable, he or she must be incarcerated until the end of his or her life due to the high risk of reoffending. Early release and release on temporary licence are not permitted.

<sup>2</sup> Only if new scientific findings prove that the offender can be cured and thus no longer represents a danger to the public can new reports be drawn up. If the offender is released on the basis of these new reports, the authorities granting his or her release must accept liability if he reoffends.

<sup>3</sup> All reports assessing sex offenders or violent offenders must be drawn up by at least two experienced specialists who are independent of each other. The reports must take account of all the principles that are important for the assessment.

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 8 February 2004 (Federal Decree of 20 June 2003, Federal Council Decree of 21 April 2004; AS **2004** 2341; BBI **2000** 3336, **2001** 3433, **2003** 4434, **2004** 2199).

**Art. 123b<sup>1</sup>**No time limit for the right to prosecute or for penalties for sexual or pornography offences involving prepubescent children

The right to prosecute sexual or pornography offences involving prepubescent children and the penalties for such offences is not subject to a time limit.

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 30 Nov. 2008, in force since 30 Nov. 2008 (Federal Decree of 13 June 2008, Federal Council Decree of 23 Jan. 2009; AS **2009** 471; BBI **2006** 3657, **2007** 5369, **2008** 5245, **2009** 605).

**Art. 123c<sup>1</sup>**Measure relating to sexual offences involving children or persons who are incapable of judgement or resistance

Persons convicted of harming the sexual integrity of a child or of a dependent person shall permanently lose the right to carry on a profession or voluntary activity involving minors or dependent persons.

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 18 May 2014, in force since 18 May 2014 (Federal Council Decree of 20 Feb. 2014; AS **2014** 2771; BBl **2009** 7021, **2011** 4435, **2012** 8819, **2014** 6349 1779).

#### **Art. 124** Victim support

The Confederation and the Cantons shall ensure that persons who have suffered harm to their physical, mental or sexual integrity as the result of a criminal act receive support and are adequately compensated if they experience financial difficulties as a result of that criminal act.

#### **Art. 125** Weights and measures

The Confederation is responsible for legislation on weights and measures.

## Chapter 3 Financial System

#### **Art. 126**<sup>1</sup> Financial management

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation shall maintain its income and expenditure in balance over time.

<sup>2</sup> The ceiling for total expenditure that is to be approved in the budget is based on the expected income after taking account of the economic situation.

<sup>3</sup> Exceptional financial requirements may justify an appropriate increase in the ceiling in terms of paragraph 2. The Federal Assembly shall decide on any increase in accordance with Article 159 paragraph 3 letter c.

<sup>4</sup> If the total expenditure in the federal accounts exceeds the ceiling in terms of paragraphs 2 or 3, compensation for this additional expenditure must be made in subsequent years.

<sup>5</sup> The details are regulated by law.

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 2 Dec. 2001 (Federal Decree of 22 June 2001, Federal Council Decree of 4 Feb. 2002; AS **2002** 241; BBl **2000** 4653, **2001** 2387 2878, **2002** 1209).

#### **Art. 127** Principles of taxation

<sup>1</sup> The main structural features of any tax, in particular those liable to pay tax, the object of the tax and its assessment, are regulated by law.

<sup>2</sup> Provided the nature of the tax permits it, the principles of universality and uniformity of taxation as well as the principle of taxation according to ability to pay are applied.

<sup>3</sup> Intercantonal double taxation is prohibited. The Confederation shall take the measures required.

#### **Art. 128** Direct taxes\*<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation may levy a direct tax:

- a. of a maximum of 11.5 per cent on the income of private individuals;
- b.<sup>2</sup> of a maximum of 8.5 per cent of the net profit of legal entities;
- c.<sup>3</sup>

...

<sup>2</sup> The Confederation, in fixing the taxation rates, shall take account of the burden of direct taxation imposed by the Cantons and communes.

<sup>3</sup> In relation to the tax on the income of private individuals, regular revisions shall be made to compensate for the consequences of an increased tax burden due to inflation.

<sup>4</sup> The tax is assessed and collected by the Cantons. A minimum of 17 per cent of the gross revenue from taxation is allocated to the Cantons. This share may be reduced to 15 per cent if the consequences of financial equalisation so require.<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>1\*</sup> With transitional provision

<sup>2</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 28 Nov. 2004, in force since 1 Jan. 2007 (Federal Decree of 19 March 2004, Federal Council Decree of 26 Jan. 2005, Federal Council Decree of 2 Feb. 2006; AS **2006** 1057; BBI **2003** 1531, **2004** 1363, **2005** 951).

<sup>3</sup> Repealed by the popular vote on 28 Nov. 2004, with effect from 1 Jan. 2007 (Federal Decree of 19 March 2004, Federal Council Decree of 26 Jan. 2005, Federal Council Decree of 2 Feb. 2006; AS **2006** 1057; BBI **2003** 1531, **2004** 1363, **2005** 951).

<sup>4</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 28 Nov 2004, in force since 1 Jan. 2008 (Federal Council Decree of 3 Oct 2003, Federal Council Decree of 26 Jan. 2005, Federal Council Decree of 7 Nov. 2007; AS **2007** 5765; BBI **2002** 2291, **2003** 6591, **2005** 951).

#### **Art. 129** Tax harmonisation

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation shall set out principles on the harmonisation of the direct taxes imposed by the Confederation, the Cantons and the communes; it shall take account of the efforts towards harmonisation made by the Cantons.

<sup>2</sup> Harmonisation shall extend to tax liability, the object of the tax and the tax period, procedural law and the law relating to tax offences. Matters excluded from harmonisation shall include in particular tax scales, tax rates and tax allowances.

<sup>3</sup> The Confederation may issue regulations to prevent unjustified tax benefits.

#### **Art. 130**<sup>1</sup> Value added tax<sup>\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation may levy value added tax on the supply of goods, on services, including goods and services for personal use, and on imports, at a standard rate of a maximum of 6.5 per cent and at a reduced rate of at least 2.0 per cent.

<sup>2</sup> The law may provide for the taxation of accommodation services at a rate between the reduced rate and the standard rate.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>3</sup> If, due to demographic changes, the financing of the Old-Age, Survivors' and Invalidity Insurance is no longer guaranteed, the standard rate may be increased by federal act by a maximum of 1 percentage point and the reduced rate by a maximum of 0.3 of a percentage point.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3bis</sup> In order to finance railway infrastructure, the rates shall be increased by 0.1 of a percentage point.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> 5 per cent of the non-earmarked revenues shall be used to reduce the health insurance premiums of persons on low incomes, unless an alternative method of assisting such persons is provided for by law.

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 28 Nov. 2004, in force since 1 Jan. 2007 (Federal Decree of 19 March 2004, Federal Council Decree of 26 Jan. 2005, Federal Council Decree of 2 Feb. 2006; AS **2006** 1057; BBI **2003** 1531, **2004** 1363, **2005** 951).<sup>\*</sup> With transitional provision

<sup>2</sup> The legislature has made use of this power; see Art. 25 para. 4 of the Value Added Tax Act of 12 June 2009 (SR 641.20), under which the rate of value added tax amounts to 3.8% (special rate for accommodation services), valid from 1 Jan. 2011 until 31 Dec. 2017.

<sup>3</sup> The legislature has made use of this power; see Art. 25 para. 1 and 2 of the Value Added Tax Act of 12 June 2009 (SR 641.20) under which the rates of value added tax amounts to 8 % (standard rate) and 2.5% (reduced rate) valid from 1 Jan. 2011 until 31 Dec. 2017.

<sup>4</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 9 Feb. 2014, in force since 1 Jan. 2016 (Federal Decree of 20 June 2013, Federal Council Decree of 13 May 2014, Federal Council Decree of 2 June 2014, Federal Council Decree of 6 June 2014; AS 2015 645; BBI 20106637, 2012 1577, 2013 4725 6518, 2014 4113 4117).

#### **Art. 131** Special consumption taxes <sup>\*1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation may level special consumption taxes on:

- a. tobacco and tobacco products;
- b. distilled spirits;
- c. beer;
- d. automobiles and their parts;
- e. petroleum, other mineral oils, natural gas and products obtained by refining these resources, as well as on motor fuels.

<sup>2</sup> It may also levy:

- a. a surcharge on the consumption tax on motor fuels with the exception of aviation fuels;
- b. a charge that applies when motor vehicles are powered by means other than motor fuels in accordance with paragraph 1 letter e.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2bis</sup> If the monies are insufficient to carry out the tasks provided for under Article 87b in connection with air traffic, the Confederation shall levy a surcharge on the consumption tax on aviation fuels.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> The Cantons shall receive ten per cent of the net proceeds from the taxation of distilled spirits. These funds must be used to fight the causes and effects of substance addiction.

<sup>1\*</sup> With transitional provision

<sup>2</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 12 Feb. 2017, in force since 1 Jan. 2018 (Federal Decree of 30 Sept. 2016, Federal Council Decree of 10 Nov. 2016 - AS 2017 6731; BBI 2015 2065, 2016 7587, 2017 3387).

<sup>3</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 12 Feb. 2017, in force since 1 Jan. 2018 (Federal Decree of 30 Sept. 2016, Federal Council Decree of 10 Nov. 2016 - AS 2017 6731; BBI 2015 2065, 2016 7587, 2017 3387).

#### **Art. 132** Stamp duty and withholding tax

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation may levy a stamp duty on securities, on receipts for insurance premiums and on other commercial deeds; deeds relating to property and mortgage transactions are exempt from stamp duty.

<sup>2</sup> The Confederation may levy a withholding tax on income from moveable capital assets, on lottery winnings and on insurance benefits. 10 per cent of the tax revenue shall be allocated to the Cantons.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 28 Nov 2004, in force since 1 Jan. 2008 (Federal Council Decree of 3 Oct 2003, Federal Council Decree of 26 Jan. 2005, Federal Council Decree of 7 Nov. 2007; AS **2007** 5765; BBl **2002** 2291, **2003** 6591, **2005** 951).

#### **Art. 133** Customs duties

The Confederation is responsible for legislation on customs duties and other duties on the cross-border movement of goods.

#### **Art. 134** Exclusion of cantonal and communal taxation

Anything that is declared by federal legislation to be subject to, or exempt from value added tax, special consumption taxes, stamp duty or withholding tax may not be made liable to similar taxes by the Cantons or communes.

#### **Art. 135**<sup>1</sup>Equalisation of financial resources and burdens

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation shall issue regulations on the equitable equalisation of financial resources and burdens between the Confederation and the Cantons as well as among the Cantons.

<sup>2</sup> The equalisation of financial resources and burdens is intended in particular to:

- a. reduce the differences in financial capacity among the Cantons;
- b. guarantee the Cantons a minimum level of financial resources;
- c. compensate for excessive financial burdens on individual Cantons due to geo-topographical or socio-demographic factors;
- d. encourage intercantonal cooperation on burden equalisation;
- e. maintain the tax competitiveness of the Cantons by national and international comparison.

<sup>3</sup> The funds for the equalisation of financial resources shall be provided by those Cantons with a higher level of resources and by the Confederation. The payments made by those Cantons with a higher level of resources shall amount to a minimum of two thirds and a maximum of 80 per cent of the payments made by the Confederation.

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 28 Nov 2004, in force since 1 Jan. 2008 (Federal Council Decree of 3 Oct 2003, Federal Council Decree of 26 Jan. 2005, Federal Council Decree of 7 Nov. 2007; AS **2007** 5765; BBl **2002** 2291, **2003** 6591, **2005** 951).

## **Title 4 The People and the Cantons**

### **Chapter 1 General Provisions**

#### **Art. 136** Political rights

<sup>1</sup> All Swiss citizens over the age of eighteen, unless they lack legal capacity due to mental illness or mental incapacity, have political rights in federal matters. All citizens have the same political rights and duties.

<sup>2</sup> They may participate in elections to the National Council and in federal popular votes, and launch or sign popular initiatives and requests for referendums in federal matters.

**Art. 137** Political parties

The political parties shall contribute to forming the opinion and will of the People.

## Chapter 2 Initiative and Referendum

**Art. 138** Popular initiative requesting the total revision of the Federal Constitution

<sup>1</sup> Any 100,000 persons eligible to vote may within 18 months of the official publication of their initiative propose a total revision of the Federal Constitution.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>2</sup> This proposal must be submitted to a vote of the People.

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 9 Feb. 2003, in force since 1 Aug. 2003 (Federal Decree of 4 Oct. 2002, Federal Council Decree of 25 March 2003, Federal Decree of 19 June 2003; AS **2003** 1949; BBI **2001** 4803 6080, **2002** 6485, **2003** 3111 3954 3960).

**Art. 139<sup>1</sup>** Popular initiative requesting a partial revision of the Federal Constitution in specific terms

<sup>1</sup> Any 100,000 persons eligible to vote may within 18 months of the official publication of their initiative request a partial revision of the Federal Constitution.

<sup>2</sup> A popular initiative for the partial revision of the Federal Constitution may take the form of a general proposal or of a specific draft of the provisions proposed.

<sup>3</sup> If the initiative fails to comply with the requirements of consistency of form, and of subject matter, or if it infringes mandatory provisions of international law, the Federal Assembly shall declare it to be invalid in whole or in part.

<sup>4</sup> If the Federal Assembly is in agreement with an initiative in the form of a general proposal, it shall draft the partial revision on the basis of the initiative and submit it to the vote of the People and the Cantons. If the Federal Assembly rejects the initiative, it shall submit it to a vote of the People; the People shall decide whether the initiative should be adopted. If they vote in favour, the Federal Assembly shall draft the corresponding bill.

<sup>5</sup> An initiative in the form of a specific draft shall be submitted to the vote of the People and the Cantons. The Federal Assembly shall recommend whether the initiative should be adopted or rejected. It may submit a counter-proposal to the initiative.

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 27 Sept. 2009, in force since 27 Sept. 2009 (Federal Decree of 19 Dec. 2008, Federal Council Decree of 1 Dec. 2009; AS **2009** 6409; BBI **2008** 2891 2907, **2009** 13 8719).

**Art. 139a<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 9 Feb. 2003 (Federal Decree of 4 Oct. 2002, Federal Council Decree of 25 March 2003; AS **2003** 1949; BBI **2001** 4803 6080, **2002** 6485, **2003** 3111). Repealed in the Popular Vote on 27 Sept. 2009, with effect from 27 Sept. 2009 (Federal Decree of 19 Dec. 2008, Federal Council Decree of 1 Dec. 2009; AS **2009** 6409; BBI **2008** 2891 2907, **2009** 13 8719). This article in its version in the Federal Decree of 4 Oct. 2002 never came into force.

**Art. 139b<sup>1</sup>** Procedure applicable to an initiative and counter-proposal

<sup>1</sup> The People vote on the initiative and the counter-proposal at the same time.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> The People may vote in favour of both proposals. In response to the third question, they may indicate the proposal that they prefer if both are accepted.

<sup>3</sup> If in response to the third question one proposal to amend the Constitution receives more votes from the People and the other more votes from the Cantons, the proposal that comes into force is that which achieves the higher sum if the percentage of votes of the People and the percentage of votes of the Cantons in the third question are added together.

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 9 Feb. 2003, para. 2 und 3 in force since 1 Aug. 2003 (Federal Decree of 4 Oct. 2002, Federal Council Decree of 25 March 2003, Federal Decree of 19 June 2003; AS **2003** 1949; BBI **2001** 4803 6080, **2002** 6485, **2003** 3111 3954 3960). Para. 1 in its version in the Federal Decree of 4 Oct. 2002 never came into force.

<sup>2</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 27 Sept. 2009, in force since 27 Sept. 2009 (Federal Decree of 19 Dec. 2008, Federal Council Decree of 1 Dec. 2009; AS **2009** 6409; BBI **2008** 2891 2907, **2009** 13 8719).

**Art. 140** Mandatory referendum

<sup>1</sup> The following must be put to the vote of the People and the Cantons:

- a. amendments to the Federal Constitution;
- b. accession to organisations for collective security or to supranational communities;
- c. emergency federal acts that are not based on a provision of the Constitution and whose term of validity exceeds one year; such federal acts must be put to the vote within one year of being passed by the Federal Assembly.

<sup>2</sup> The following are submitted to a vote of the People:

- a. popular initiatives for a total revision of the Federal Constitution;
- a<sup>bis</sup>.<sup>1</sup> ...
- b.<sup>2</sup> popular initiatives for a partial revision of the Federal Constitution in the form of a general proposal that have been rejected by the Federal Assembly;
- c. the question of whether a total revision of the Federal Constitution should be carried out, in the event that there is disagreement between the two Councils.

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 9 Feb. 2003 (Federal Decree of 4 Oct. 2002, Federal Council Decree of 25 March 2003; AS **2003** 1949; BBI **2001** 4803 6080, **2002** 6485, **2003** 3111). Repealed in the Popular Vote on 27 Sept. 2009, with effect from 27 Sept. 2009 (Federal Decree of 19 Dec. 2008, Federal Council Decree of 1 Dec. 2009; AS **2009** 6409; BBI **2008** 2891 2907, **2009** 13 8719). This let. in its version of Federal Decree of 4 Oct. 2002 never came into force.

<sup>2</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 27 Sept. 2009, in force since 27 Sept. 2009 (Federal Decree of 19 Dec. 2008, Federal Council Decree of 1 Dec. 2009; AS **2009** 6409; BBI **2008** 2891 2907, **2009** 13 8719).

**Art. 141** Optional referendum

<sup>1</sup> If within 100 days of the official publication of the enactment any 50,000 persons eligible to vote or any eight Cantons request it, the following shall be submitted to a vote of the People:<sup>1</sup>

- a. federal acts;
- b. emergency federal acts whose term of validity exceeds one year;
- c. federal decrees, provided the Constitution or an act so requires;
- d. international treaties that:
  - 1. are of unlimited duration and may not be terminated,
  - 2. provide for accession to an international organisation,
  - 3.<sup>2</sup> contain important legislative provisions or whose implementation requires the enactment of federal legislation.

<sup>2</sup> ...<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 9 Feb. 2003, in force since 1 Aug. 2003 (Federal Decree of 4 Oct. 2002, Federal Council Decree of 25 March 2003, Federal Decree of 19 June 2003; AS **2003** 1949; BBI **2001** 4803 6080, **2002** 6485, **2003** 3111 3954 3960).

<sup>2</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 9 Feb. 2003, in force since 1 Aug. 2003 (Federal Decree of 4 Oct. 2002, Federal Council Decree of 25 March 2003, Federal Decree of 19 June 2003; AS **2003** 1949; BBI **2001** 4803 6080, **2002** 6485, **2003** 3111 3954 3960).

<sup>3</sup> Repealed by the popular vote on 9 Feb. 2003, with effect from 1 Aug. 2003 (Federal Decree of 4 Oct. 2002, Federal Council Decree of 25. March 2003, Federal Decree of 19 June 2003; AS **2003** 1949; BBI **2001** 4803 6080, **2002** 6485, **2003** 3111 3954 3960).

#### **Art. 141a**<sup>1</sup> Implementation of international treaties

<sup>1</sup> If the decision on ratification of an international treaty is subject to a mandatory referendum, the Federal Assembly may incorporate in the decision on ratification the amendments to the Constitution that provide for the implementation of the treaty.

<sup>2</sup> If the decision on ratification of an international treaty is subject to an optional referendum, the Federal Assembly may incorporate in the decision on ratification the amendments to the law that provide for the implementation of the treaty.

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 9 Feb. 2003, in force since 1 Aug. 2003 (Federal Decree of 4 Oct. 2002, Federal Council Decree of 25 March 2003, Federal Decree of 19 June 2003; AS **2003** 1949; BBI **2001** 4803 6080, **2002** 6485, **2003** 3111 3954 3960).

#### **Art. 142** Required majorities

<sup>1</sup> Proposals that are submitted to the vote of the People are accepted if a majority of those who vote approve them.

<sup>2</sup> Proposals that are submitted to the vote of the People and Cantons are accepted if a majority of those who vote and a majority of the Cantons approve them.

<sup>3</sup> The result of a popular vote in a Canton determines the vote of the Canton.

<sup>4</sup> The Cantons of Obwalden, Nidwalden, Basel-Stadt, Basel-Landschaft, Appenzell Ausserrhoden and Appenzell Innerrhoden each have half a cantonal vote.

## Title 5 Federal Authorities

### Chapter 1 General Provisions

#### **Art. 143** Eligibility for election

Any person eligible to vote may be elected to the National Council, the Federal Council or the Federal Supreme Court.

#### **Art. 144** Incompatibility

<sup>1</sup> No member of the National Council, of the Council of States, of the Federal Council or judge of the Federal Supreme Court may at the same time be a member of any other of these bodies.

<sup>2</sup> No member of the Federal Council or full-time judges of the Federal Supreme Court may hold any other federal or cantonal office or undertake any other gainful economic activity.

<sup>3</sup> The law may provide for further forms of incompatibility.

#### **Art. 145** Term of office

The members of the National Council and of the Federal Council as well as the Federal Chancellor are elected for a term of office of four years. Judges of the Federal Supreme Court have a term of office of six years.

#### **Art. 146** State liability

The Confederation shall be liable for damage or loss unlawfully caused by its organs in the exercise of official activities.

#### **Art. 147** Consultation procedure

The Cantons, the political parties and interested groups shall be invited to express their views when preparing important legislation or other projects of substantial impact as well as in relation to significant international treaties.

## Chapter 2 Federal Assembly

### Section 1 Organisation

#### **Art. 148** Status

<sup>1</sup> Subject to the rights of the People and the Cantons, the Federal Assembly is the supreme authority of the Confederation.

<sup>2</sup> The Federal Assembly comprises two chambers, the National Council and the Council of States; both chambers shall be of equal standing.

#### **Art. 149** Composition and election of the National Council

<sup>1</sup> The National Council is composed of 200 representatives of the People.

<sup>2</sup> The representatives are elected directly by the People according to a system of proportional representation. A general election is held every four years.

<sup>3</sup> Each Canton constitutes an electoral constituency.

<sup>4</sup> The seats are allocated to the Cantons according to their relative populations. Each Canton has at least one seat.

#### **Art. 150** Composition and election of the Council of States

<sup>1</sup> The Council of States is composed of 46 representatives of the Cantons.

<sup>2</sup> The Cantons of Obwalden, Nidwalden, Basel-Stadt, Basel-Landschaft, Appenzell Ausserrhoden and Appenzell Innerrhoden each elect one representative; the other Cantons each elect two representatives.

<sup>3</sup> The Cantons determine the rules for the election of their representatives to the Council of States.

#### **Art. 151** Sessions

<sup>1</sup> The Councils convene in session regularly. The convening of sessions is governed by law.

<sup>2</sup> The Federal Council or one quarter of the members of either Council may request that the Councils be convened for an extraordinary session.

#### **Art. 152** Presidency

Each Council elects a President from its members for a term of one year, together with a first Vice-President and a second Vice-President. Re-election for the following year is not permitted.

#### **Art. 153** Parliamentary committees

<sup>1</sup> Each Council forms committees from its members.

<sup>2</sup> The law may provide for joint committees.

<sup>3</sup> The law may delegate specific powers, which may not be legislative in their nature, to committees.

<sup>4</sup> In order to fulfil their duties, the committees have the right to information and to inspect documents and the power to conduct investigations. The extent of such rights and powers is governed by the law.

#### **Art. 154** Parliamentary groups

The members of the Federal Assembly may form parliamentary groups.

#### **Art. 155** Parliamentary Services

The Federal Assembly has parliamentary services at its disposal. It may call on the services of offices of the Federal Administration. The details are regulated by law.

### Section 2 Procedure

#### **Art. 156** Separate proceedings

<sup>1</sup> The proceedings of the National Council and Council of States take place separately.

<sup>2</sup> Decisions of the Federal Assembly require the agreement of both Chambers.

<sup>3</sup> Provision shall be made by the law to ensure that in the event of disagreement between the Councils decisions are made on:

a.

the validity or partial invalidity of a popular initiative;

**b.<sup>1</sup>**

the implementation of a popular initiative in the form of a general proposal that has been adopted by the People;

**c.<sup>2</sup>**

the implementation of a Federal Decree initiating a total revision of the Federal Constitution that has been approved by the People;

**d.**

the budget or any amendment to it.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 27 Sept. 2009, in force since 27 Sept. 2009 (Federal Decree of 19 Dec. 2008, Federal Council Decree of 1 Dec. 2009; AS **2009** 6409; BBl **2008** 2891 2907, **2009** 13 8719).

<sup>2</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 27 Sept. 2009, in force since 27 Sept. 2009 (Federal Decree of 19 Dec. 2008, Federal Council Decree of 1 Dec. 2009; AS **2009** 6409; BBl **2008** 2891 2907, **2009** 13 8719).

<sup>3</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 9 Feb. 2003, lets. a and d in force since 1 Aug. 2003 (Federal Decree of 4 Oct. 2002, Federal Council Decree of 25 March 2003, Federal Decree of 19 June 2003; AS **2003** 1949; BBl **2001** 4803 6080, **2002** 6485, **2003** 3111 3954 3960).

#### **Art. 157** Joint proceedings

<sup>1</sup> The National Council and Council of States hold joint proceedings as the United Federal Assembly under the presidency of the President of the National Council in order to:

**a.**

conduct elections;

**b.**

decide on conflicts of jurisdiction between the highest federal authorities;

**c.**

decide on applications for pardons.

<sup>2</sup> The United Federal Assembly also convenes for special events and to hear declarations made by the Federal Council.

#### **Art. 158** Public meetings

Meetings of the Councils are held in public. The law may provide for exceptions.

#### **Art. 159** Quorum and required majority

<sup>1</sup> The Councils are quorate if a majority of their members is present.

<sup>2</sup> Decisions are taken in both Chambers and in the United Federal Assembly by the majority of those who vote.

<sup>3</sup> However, the consent of an absolute majority of the members of each of the two Councils is required for:

**a.**

a declaration that a federal act is urgent;

**b.**

provisions on subsidies, guarantee credits or spending ceilings that involve new non-recurrent expenditure of more than 20 million francs or new recurrent expenditure of more than 2 million francs;

**c.<sup>1</sup>**

an increase in overall expenditure in the case of extraordinary financial requirements in terms of Article 126 paragraph 3.

<sup>4</sup> The Federal Assembly may, by ordinance, adjust subsidies made in terms of paragraph 3 letter b in line with inflation.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 2 Dec. 2001 (Federal Decree of 22 June 2001, Federal Council Decree of 4 Feb. 2002; AS 2002 241; BBI 2000 4653, 2001 2387 2878, 2002 1209).

<sup>2</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 2 Dec. 2001 (Federal Decree of 22 June 2001, Federal Council Decree of 4 Feb. 2002; AS 2002 241; BBI 2000 4653, 2001 2387 2878, 2002 1209).

#### **Art. 160** Right to submit initiatives and motions

<sup>1</sup> Any Council member, parliamentary group, parliamentary committee or Canton has the right to submit an initiative to the Federal Assembly.

<sup>2</sup> Council members and the Federal Council have the right to submit motions on business that is under discussion.

#### **Art. 161** Prohibition of voting instructions

<sup>1</sup> No member of the Federal Assembly may vote on the instructions of another person.

<sup>2</sup> Members must disclose their links to interest groups.

#### **Art. 162** Immunity

<sup>1</sup> The members of the Federal Assembly and the Federal Council as well as the Federal Chancellor may not be held liable for statements that they make in the Assembly or in its organs.

<sup>2</sup> The law may provide for further forms of immunity and extend its scope to include other persons.

### Section 3 Powers

#### **Art. 163** Form of Federal Assembly enactments

<sup>1</sup> The Federal Assembly shall enact provisions that establish binding legal rules in the form of federal acts or ordinances.

<sup>2</sup> Other enactments are promulgated in the form of a federal decree; a federal decree that is not subject to a referendum is known as a "simple federal decree".

#### **Art. 164** Legislation

<sup>1</sup> All significant provisions that establish binding legal rules must be enacted in the form of a federal act. These include in particular fundamental provisions on:

- a. the exercise of political rights;
- b. the restriction of constitutional rights;
- c. the rights and obligations of persons;
- d. those liable to pay tax as well as the subject matter and assessment of taxes and duties;
- e. the duties and services of the Confederation;
- f.

the obligations of the Cantons in relation to the implementation and enforcement of federal law;

9.

the organisation and procedure of the federal authorities.

<sup>2</sup> Legislative powers may be delegated by federal act unless this is prohibited by the Federal Constitution.

**Art. 165** Emergency legislation

<sup>1</sup> Federal acts whose coming into force cannot be delayed (emergency federal acts) may be declared urgent by an absolute majority of the members of each of the two Councils and be brought into force immediately. Such acts must be of limited duration.

<sup>2</sup> If a referendum is requested on an emergency federal act, the act must be repealed one year after being passed by the Federal Assembly if it has not in the meantime been approved by the People.

<sup>3</sup> An emergency federal act that does not have the Constitution as its basis must be repealed one year after being passed by the Federal Assembly if it has not in the meantime been approved by the People and the Cantons. Any such act must be of limited duration.

<sup>4</sup> An emergency federal act that is not approved in a popular vote may not be renewed.

**Art. 166** Foreign relations and international treaties

<sup>1</sup> The Federal Assembly shall participate in shaping foreign policy and supervise the maintenance of foreign relations.

<sup>2</sup> It shall approve international treaties, with the exception of those that are concluded by the Federal Council under a statutory provision or an international treaty.

**Art. 167** Finance

The Federal Assembly determines the expenditure of the Confederation, adopts the budget and approves the federal accounts.

**Art. 168** Appointments

<sup>1</sup> The Federal Assembly elects the members of the Federal Council, the Federal Chancellor, the judges of the Federal Supreme Court and, in times of war, the Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces ("the General").

<sup>2</sup> The law may authorise the Federal Assembly to make or confirm other appointments.

**Art. 169** Oversight

<sup>1</sup> The Federal Assembly exercises oversight over the Federal Council and the Federal Administration, the federal courts and other bodies entrusted with the tasks of the Confederation.

<sup>2</sup> Official secrecy does not apply in dealings with the special delegations of supervisory committees that are established under the law.

**Art. 170** Evaluation of effectiveness

The Federal Assembly shall ensure that federal measures are evaluated with regard to their effectiveness.

**Art. 171** Tasks of the Federal Council

The Federal Assembly may assign functions to the Federal Council. The details are regulated by law, and in particular the means by which the Federal Assembly may intervene in matters that fall within the remit of the Federal Council.

**Art. 172 Relations between the Confederation and the Cantons**

<sup>1</sup> The Federal Assembly shall ensure the maintenance of good relations between the Confederation and the Cantons.

<sup>2</sup> It shall guarantee the cantonal constitutions.

<sup>3</sup> It shall decide whether to approve intercantonal agreements and treaties between Cantons and foreign countries where the Federal Council or a Canton raises an objection to any such treaty.

**Art. 173 Further duties and powers**

<sup>1</sup> The Federal Assembly has the following additional duties and powers:

a.

Taking measures to safeguard external security and the independence and neutrality of Switzerland.

b.

Taking measures to safeguard internal security.

c.

If extraordinary circumstances require, issuing ordinances or simple federal decrees in order to fulfil its duties under letters (a) and (b).

d.

Regulating active service and mobilising the armed forces or sections thereof for this purpose.

e.

Taking measures to enforce federal law.

f.

Ruling on the validity of popular initiatives that meet the formal requirements.

g.

Participating in the general planning of state activities.

h.

Deciding on individual acts where a federal act expressly so provides.

i.

Deciding on conflicts of jurisdiction between the highest federal authorities.

k.

Issuing pardons and deciding on amnesties.

<sup>2</sup> The Federal Assembly also deals with matters that fall within the remit of the Confederation and are not the responsibility of any other authority.

<sup>3</sup> Other duties and powers may be delegated by law to the Federal Assembly.

## Chapter 3 Federal Council and Federal Administration

### Section 1 Organisation and Procedure

#### **Art. 174 Federal Council**

The Federal Council is the supreme governing and executive authority of the Confederation.

**Art. 175** Composition and election

<sup>1</sup> The Federal Council has seven members.

<sup>2</sup> The members of the Federal Council are elected by the Federal Assembly following each general election to the National Council.

<sup>3</sup> They are elected for a term of office of four years. Any Swiss citizen eligible for election to the National Council may be elected to the Federal Council.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>4</sup> In electing the Federal Council, care must be taken to ensure that the various geographical and language regions of the country are appropriately represented.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 7 Feb. 1999 (Federal Decree of 9 Oct. 1998, Federal Council Decree of 2 March 1999; AS **1999** 1239; BBl **1993** IV 554, **1994** III 1370, **1998** 4800, **1999** 2475 8768).

<sup>2</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 7 Feb. 1999 (Federal Decree of 9 Oct. 1998, Federal Council Decree of 2 March 1999; AS **1999** 1239; BBl **1993** IV 554, **1994** III 1370, **1998** 4800, **1999** 2475 8768).

**Art. 176** Presidency

<sup>1</sup> The President of the Confederation chairs the Federal Council.

<sup>2</sup> The President and the Vice-President of the Federal Council are elected by the Federal Assembly from the members of the Federal Council for a term of office of one year.

<sup>3</sup> Re-election for the following year is not permitted. The President may not be elected Vice-President for the following year.

**Art. 177** Principle of collegiality and allocation to departments

<sup>1</sup> The Federal Council reaches its decisions as a collegial body.

<sup>2</sup> For the purposes of preparation and implementation, the business of the Federal Council is allocated to its individual members according to department.

<sup>3</sup> Business may be delegated to and directly dealt with by departments or their subordinate administrative units; in such cases, the right to legal recourse is guaranteed.

**Art. 178** Federal Administration

<sup>1</sup> The Federal Council is in charge of the Federal Administration. It ensures that it is organised appropriately and that it fulfils its duties effectively.

<sup>2</sup> The Federal Administration is organised into Departments; each Department is headed by a member of the Federal Council.

<sup>3</sup> Administrative tasks may by law be delegated to public or private organisations, entities or persons that do not form part of the Federal Administration.

**Art. 179** Federal Chancellery

The Federal Chancellery is the general administrative office of the Federal Council. It is headed by a Federal Chancellor.

## Section 2 Powers

**Art. 180** Government policy

<sup>1</sup> The Federal Council decides on the objectives of federal government policy and the means by which they should be achieved. It plans and coordinates state activities.

<sup>2</sup> It informs the general public fully and in good time about its activities, unless overriding public or private interests prevent this.

**Art. 181** Right to initiate legislation

The Federal Council submits drafts of Federal Assembly legislation to the Federal Assembly.

**Art. 182** Law-making and implementation of legislation

<sup>1</sup> The Federal Council enacts legislative provisions in the form of ordinances, provided it has the authority to do so under the Constitution or the law.

<sup>2</sup> It ensures the implementation of legislation, the resolutions of the Federal Assembly and the judgments of federal judicial authorities.

**Art. 183** Finances

<sup>1</sup> The Federal Council draws up the financial plan and the draft budget and prepare the federal accounts.

<sup>2</sup> It ensures orderly financial management.

**Art. 184** Foreign relations

<sup>1</sup> The Federal Council is responsible for foreign relations, subject to the right of participation of the Federal Assembly; it represents Switzerland abroad.

<sup>2</sup> It signs and ratifies international treaties. It submits them to the Federal Assembly for approval.

<sup>3</sup> Where safeguarding the interests of the country so requires, the Federal Council may issue ordinances and rulings. Ordinances must be of limited duration.

**Art. 185** External and internal security

<sup>1</sup> The Federal Council takes measures to safeguard external security, independence and neutrality of Switzerland.

<sup>2</sup> It takes measures to safeguard internal security.

<sup>3</sup> It may in direct application of this Article issue ordinances and rulings in order to counter existing or imminent threats of serious disruption to public order or internal or external security. Such ordinances must be limited in duration.

<sup>4</sup> In cases of emergency, it may mobilise the armed forces. Where it mobilises more than 4,000 members of the armed forces for active service or where the deployment of such troops is expected to last for more than three weeks, the Federal Assembly must be convened without delay.

**Art. 186** Relations between the Confederation and the Cantons

<sup>1</sup> The Federal Council is responsible for maintaining relations between the Confederation and the Cantons and collaborates with the latter.

<sup>2</sup> It may approve cantonal legislation when required to do so by federal law.

<sup>3</sup> It may object to treaties between Cantons or between Cantons and foreign countries.

<sup>4</sup> It ensures compliance with federal law, as well as the cantonal constitutions and cantonal treaties and takes the measures required to fulfil this duty.

**Art. 187** Further duties and powers

<sup>1</sup> The Federal Council also has the following duties and powers:

- a. Supervising the Federal Administration and the other bodies entrusted with federal duties.
  - b. Reporting regularly to the Federal Assembly on the conduct of its business as well as on the situation in Switzerland.
  - c. Making appointments that do not fall within the remit of other authorities.
  - d. Dealing with appeals, where the law so provides.
- <sup>2</sup> Other duties and powers may be delegated by law to the Federal Council.

## Chapter 4<sup>1</sup> Federal Supreme Court and other Judicial Authorities

### Art. 188 Status

- <sup>1</sup> The Federal Supreme Court is the supreme judicial authority of the Confederation.
- <sup>2</sup> Its organisation and procedure are governed by law.
- <sup>3</sup> The Federal Supreme Court has its own administration.

### Art. 189 Jurisdiction of the Federal Supreme Court

- <sup>1</sup> The Federal Supreme Court hears disputes concerning violations of:
- a. federal law;
  - b. international law;
  - c. inter-cantonal law;
  - d. cantonal constitutional rights;
  - e. the autonomy of the communes and other cantonal guarantees in favour of public law corporations;
  - f. federal and cantonal provisions on political rights.

1bis ...<sup>1</sup>

- <sup>2</sup> It hears disputes between the Confederation and Cantons or between Cantons.
- <sup>3</sup> The jurisdiction of the Federal Supreme Court may be extended by law.
- <sup>4</sup> Acts of the Federal Assembly or the Federal Council may not be challenged in the Federal Supreme Court. Exceptions may be provided for by law.

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 9 Feb. 2003 (Federal Decree of 4 Oct. 2002, Federal Council Decree of 25 March 2003; AS 2003 1949; BBI 2001 4803 6080, 2002 6485, 2003 3111). Repealed in the Popular Vote on 27 Sept. 2009, with effect from 27 Sept. 2009 (Federal Decree of 19 Dec. 2008, Federal Council Decree of 1 Dec. 2009; AS 2009 6409; BBI 2008 2891 2907, 2009 13 8719). This paragraph in its version of Federal Decree of 4 Oct. 2002 never came into force.

### Art. 190 Applicable law

The Federal Supreme Court and the other judicial authorities apply the federal acts and international law.

**Art. 191** Access to the Federal Supreme Court

<sup>1</sup> Access to the Federal Supreme Court is guaranteed by law.

<sup>2</sup> For disputes that do not relate to a legal issue of fundamental importance, the law may stipulate a threshold for the amount in dispute.

<sup>3</sup> The law may exclude access to the Federal Supreme Court in relation to specific matters.

<sup>4</sup> The law may provide for a simplified procedure for appeals that are manifestly unfounded.

**Art. 191a**<sup>1</sup> Other federal judicial authorities

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation shall appoint a criminal court, which hears at first instance criminal cases that by law come under federal jurisdiction. The law may confer further powers on the Federal Criminal Court.

<sup>2</sup> The Confederation shall appoint judicial authorities to hear public law disputes that come under the jurisdiction of the Federal Administration.

<sup>3</sup> The law may provide for further federal judicial authorities.

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 12 March 2000, para. 1 in force since 1 April 2003, paras 2 and 3 in force since 1 Sept. 2005 (Federal Decree of 8 Oct. 1999, Federal Council Decree of 17 May 2000, Federal Decree of 24 Sept. 2002; AS 2002 3148; BBl 1997 I 1, 1999 8633, 2000 2990, 2001 4202, 2005 1475).

**Art. 191b** Cantonal judicial authorities

<sup>1</sup> The Cantons shall appoint judicial authorities to judge civil and public law disputes and criminal law cases.

<sup>2</sup> They may appoint joint judicial authorities.

**Art. 191c** Independence of the judiciary

The judicial authorities are independent in the exercise of their judicial powers and are bound only by the law.

## Title 6 Revision of the Federal Constitution and Transitional Provisions

### Chapter 1 Revision

**Art. 192** Principle

<sup>1</sup> The Federal Constitution may be totally or partially revised at any time.

<sup>2</sup> Unless the Federal Constitution and the legislation based on it provides otherwise, any revision of the Federal Constitution is made by the legislative process.

**Art. 193** Total revision

<sup>1</sup> A total revision of the Federal Constitution may be proposed by the People or by either of the two Councils or be decreed by the Federal Assembly.

<sup>2</sup> If the initiative emanates from the People or if the two Chambers are unable to agree, the People decide on whether a total revision should be carried out.

<sup>3</sup> If the People vote for a total revision, new elections shall be held to both Chambers.

<sup>4</sup> The mandatory provisions of international law must not be violated.

**Art. 194** Partial revision

<sup>1</sup> A partial revision of the Federal Constitution may be requested by the People or decreed by the Federal Assembly.

<sup>2</sup> The partial revision must respect the principle of cohesion of subject matter and must not violate mandatory provisions of international law.

<sup>3</sup> The popular initiative for partial revision must also respect the principle of consistency of form.

**Art. 195** Commencement

The totally or partly revised Federal Constitution comes into force when it is approved by the People and the Cantons.

## Chapter 2 Transitional Provisions

**Art. 196** Transitional provisions in terms of the Federal Decree of 18 December 1998 on a new Federal Constitution<sup>1</sup>

*1. Transitional provision to Art. 84 (Transalpine transit traffic)*

The transfer of freight transit traffic from road to rail must be completed ten years after the adoption of the popular initiative for the protection of the alpine regions from transit traffic.

*2. Transitional provision to Art. 85 (Flat-rate heavy vehicle charge)*

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation shall levy an annual charge for the use of roads that are open to general traffic on domestic and foreign motor vehicles and trailers that have a maximum permissible weight of over 3.5 tonnes.

<sup>2</sup> This charge amounts to:

	Fr.
<b>a.</b>	
for trucks and articulated motor vehicles of	
- over 3.5 to 12 t	650
- over 12 to 18 t	2000
- over 18 to 26 t	3000
- over 26 t	4000
<b>b.</b>	
for trailers of	
- over 3.5 to 8 t	650
- over 8 to 10 t	1500

- over 10 t	2000
c. for coaches	650

<sup>3</sup> The rates of the charge may be adjusted by federal act insofar as this is justified by the cost of road transport.

<sup>4</sup> In addition, the Federal Council may adjust by ordinance the tariff category above 12 t in accordance with paragraph 2 to comply with any amendments to the weight categories contained in the Road Traffic Act of 19 December 1958<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>5</sup> For vehicles that are not on the road in Switzerland for the entire year, the Federal Council shall determine suitably graduated rates of the charge; it shall take account of the costs of collecting the charge.

<sup>6</sup> The Federal Council shall regulate the implementation of the charge. It may determine rates in terms of paragraph 2 for special categories of vehicle, exempt certain vehicles from the charge and issue special regulations, in particular for journeys in border areas. Such regulations must not result in vehicles registered abroad being treated more favourably than Swiss vehicles. The Federal Council may provide for fines in respect of contraventions. The Cantons shall collect the charge on vehicles registered in Switzerland.

<sup>7</sup> The charge may be limited or abolished by law.

<sup>8</sup> This provision applies until the Heavy Vehicle Charge Act of 19 December 1997<sup>3</sup> comes into force.

*3. Transitional provisions to Art. 86 (Use of charges for tasks and costs in connection with road transport), Art. 87 (Railways and other carriers) and Art. 87a (Railway infrastructure)*<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The major rail projects include the New Rail Link through the Alps (NRLA), RAIL 2000, the connection of Eastern and Western Switzerland to the European High Speed Rail Network as well as the improvement of noise protection along railway lines through active and passive measures.

<sup>2</sup> Until the interest payments and repayments on the advances made to the fund in accordance with Article 87a paragraph 2 have been made in full, the monies in accordance with Article 86 paragraph 2 letter e shall be allocated to the special finance programme for road transport in accordance with Article 86 paragraph 4 instead of the fund in accordance with Article 86 paragraph 2.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>2bis</sup> In order to finance railway infrastructure and thereafter to finance the interest and repayments on the advances made to the fund in accordance with Article 87a paragraph 2, the Federal Council may use monies in accordance with paragraph 2 until 31 December 2018. The monies shall be calculated in accordance with Article 86 paragraph 2 letter e.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>2ter</sup> The percentage in accordance with Article 86 paragraph 2 letter f applies from two years after this provision comes into force. Prior to that, it shall be 5 per cent.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>3</sup> The financing of the major rail projects in accordance with paragraph 1 shall be carried out through the fund under Article 87a paragraph 2.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>4</sup> The four major rail projects in terms of paragraph 1 shall be adopted by federal acts. Proof must be established of the necessity and readiness for implementation For each major project in its entirety. In the case of the NRLA project, each of the construction phases shall form the subject matter of a federal act. The Federal Assembly shall approve the required financing through guarantee credits. The Federal Council shall approve the construction phases and determine the time schedule.

<sup>5</sup> This provision applies until the conclusion of the construction work and of the financing (through repayment of the advances) of the major rail projects mentioned in paragraph 1.

*4. Transitional provision to Art. 90 (Nuclear energy)*

Until 23 September 2000, no general, construction, start-up or operating licences for new facilities for the production of nuclear energy may be granted.

*5. Transitional provision to Art. 95 (Private economic activity)*

Until the enactment of federal legislation, the Cantons must mutually recognise their education or training qualifications.

*6. Transitional provision to Art. 102 (National economic supply)*

<sup>1</sup> The Confederation shall guarantee the national supply of bread grain and baking flour.

<sup>2</sup> This transitional provision remains in force until 31 December 2003 at the latest.

*7. Transitional provision to Art. 103 (Structural policy)*

For no more than ten years from the date on which the Constitution comes into force, the Cantons may retain existing regulations that make the opening of new businesses dependent on establishing a need, in order to guarantee the existence of important parts of a specific branch of the hotel and restaurant industry.

8.<sup>9</sup>...

*9. Transitional provision to Art. 110 para. 3 (National Day of the Swiss Confederation)*

<sup>1</sup> Until the amended federal legislation comes into force, the Federal Council shall regulate the details.

<sup>2</sup> The National Day of the Swiss Confederation shall not be included in the calculation of the number the public holidays in accordance with Article 18 paragraph 2 of the Employment Act<sup>10</sup>.

10.<sup>11</sup> ...

*11. Transitional provision to Art. 113 (Occupational Pension Scheme)*

Insured persons who belong to the generation working at the time of the introduction of the occupational pension scheme and therefore do not contribute for the full period shall receive the statutory minimum benefits, according to their income, within 10 to 20 years of the Act coming into force.

12.<sup>12</sup>...

*13.<sup>13</sup> Transitional provision to Art. 128 (Duration of tax levy)*

The power to levy the direct federal tax shall be limited until the end of 2020.

14.<sup>14</sup> Transitional provision to Art. 130 (Value Added Tax)<sup>15</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The power to levy value added tax is limited until the end of 2020.

<sup>2</sup> In order to guarantee the funding of invalidity insurance, the Federal Council shall raise the value added tax rates from 1 January 2011 until 31 December 2017 as follows: ...

<sup>3</sup> The revenue from the increase in rates in accordance with paragraph 2 will be allocated in full to the Compensation Fund for Invalidity Insurance.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>4</sup> In order to secure the financing of railway infrastructure, the Federal Council shall raise the tax rates under Article 25 of the Value Added Tax Act of 12 June 2009<sup>17</sup> from 1 January 2018 by 0.1 of a percentage point, in the event of an extension of the time limit under paragraph 1 until 31 December 2030 at the latest.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>5</sup> The entire revenue from the increase under paragraph 4 shall be allocated to the fund under Article 87a.<sup>19</sup>

#### *15. Transitional provision to Art. 131 (Beer tax)*

Until a federal act<sup>20</sup> comes into force, the beer tax shall be levied in accordance with the current law.

*16.*<sup>21</sup> ...

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 3 March 2002 (Federal Decree of 5 Oct. 2001, Federal Council Decree of 26 April 2002; AS **2002** 885; BBI **2000** 2453, **2001** 1183 5731, **2002** 3690).

<sup>2</sup> SR **741.01**

<sup>3</sup> SR **641.81**

<sup>4</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 12 Feb. 2017, in force since 1 Jan. 2018 (Federal Decree of 30 Sept. 2016, Federal Council Decree of 10 Nov. 2016 - AS **2017** 6731; BBI **2015** 2065, **2016** 7587, **2017** 3387).

<sup>5</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 12 Feb. 2017, in force since 1 Jan. 2018 (Federal Decree of 30 Sept. 2016, Federal Council Decree of 10 Nov. 2016 - AS **2017** 6731; BBI **2015** 2065, **2016** 7587, **2017** 3387).

<sup>6</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 12 Feb. 2017, in force since 1 Jan. 2018 (Federal Decree of 30 Sept. 2016, Federal Council Decree of 10 Nov. 2016 - AS **2017** 6731; BBI **2015** 2065, **2016** 7587, **2017** 3387).

<sup>7</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 12 Feb. 2017, in force since 1 Jan. 2018 (Federal Decree of 30 Sept. 2016, Federal Council Decree of 10 Nov. 2016 - AS **2017** 6731; BBI **2015** 2065, **2016** 7587, **2017** 3387).

<sup>8</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 9 Feb. 2014, in force since 1 Jan. 2016 (Federal Decree of 20 June 2013, Federal Council Decree of 13 May 2014, Federal Council Decree of 2 June 2014, Federal Council Decree of 6 June 2014; AS **2015** 645; BBI **2010** 6637, **2012** 1577, **2013** 4725 6518, **2014** 4113 4117).

<sup>9</sup> Art. 106 was revised on 11 March 2012.

<sup>10</sup> SR **822.11**

<sup>11</sup> Repealed by the popular vote on 28 Nov 2004, with effect from 1 Jan. 2008 (Federal Council Decree of 3 Oct 2003, Federal Council Decree of 26 Jan. 2005, Federal Council Decree of 7 Nov. 2007; AS **2007** 5765; BBI **2002** 2291, **2003** 6591, **2005** 951)

<sup>12</sup> Art. 126 was revised on 2 Dec. 2001.

<sup>13</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 28 Nov. 2004, in force since 1 Jan. 2007 (Federal Decree of 19 March 2004, Federal Council Decree of 26 Jan. 2005, Federal Council Decree of 2 Feb. 2006; AS **2006** 1057; BBI **2003** 1531, **2004** 1363, **2005** 951).

<sup>14</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 28 Nov. 2004, in force since 1 Jan. 2007 (Federal Decree of 19 March 2004, Federal Council Decree of 26 Jan. 2005, Federal Council Decree of 2 Feb. 2006; AS **2006** 1057; BBI **2003** 1531, **2004** 1363, **2005** 951).

<sup>15</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 27 Sept. 2009, in force since 1 Jan. 2011 (Federal Decree of 13 June 2008 and of 12 June 2009, Federal Council Decree of 7 Sept. 2010; AS **2010** 3821; BBI **2005** 4623, **2008** 5241, **2009** 4371 4377 4379 8719).

<sup>16</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 27 Sept. 2009, in force since 1 Jan. 2011 (Federal Decree of 13 June 2008 and of 12 June 2009, Federal Council Decree of 7 Sept. 2010; AS **2010** 3821; BBI **2005** 4623, **2008**

5241, 2009 4371 4377 4379 8719).

<sup>17</sup> SR 641.20

<sup>18</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 9 Feb. 2014, in force since 1 Jan. 2016 (Federal Decree of 20 June 2013, Federal Council Decree of 13 May 2014, Federal Council Decree of 2 June 2014, Federal Council Decree of 6 June 2014; AS 2015 645; BBI 2010 6637, 2012 1577, 2013 4725 6518, 2014 4113 4117).

<sup>19</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 9 Feb. 2014, in force since 1 Jan. 2016 (Federal Decree of 20 June 2013, Federal Council Decree of 13 May 2014, Federal Council Decree of 2 June 2014, Federal Council Decree of 6 June 2014; AS 2015 645; BBI 2010 6637, 2012 1577, 2013 4725 6518, 2014 4113 4117).

<sup>20</sup> SR 641.411. The Beer Tax Act of 6 Oct. 2006 came into force on 1 July 2007.

<sup>21</sup> Repealed by the popular vote on 28 Nov. 2004, with effect from 1 Jan. 2008 (Federal Council Decree of 3 Oct 2003, Federal Council Decree of 26 Jan. 2005, Federal Council Decree of 7 Nov. 2007; AS 2007 5765; BBI 2002 2291, 2003 6591, 2005 951)

**Art. 197**<sup>1</sup> Transitional provisions following the adoption of the Federal Constitution of 18 April 1999

### *1. Accession of Switzerland to the United Nations*

<sup>1</sup> Switzerland shall accede to the United Nations.

<sup>2</sup> The Federal Council shall be authorised to submit an application to the Secretary General of the United Nations (UN) requesting Switzerland's accession to the organisation, together with a declaration on the acceptance of the obligations contained in the UN Charter<sup>2</sup>.

### *2.<sup>3</sup> Transitional provision to Art. 62 (School education)*

From the date on which the Federal Decree of 3 October 2003<sup>4</sup> on the New System of Financial Equalisation and the Allocation of Tasks between the Confederation and Cantons comes into force, the Cantons shall, until they have their own approved special-needs school strategies, but for a minimum of three years, assume responsibility for the current payments made by the Invalidity Insurance for special needs education (including the special needs pre-school education in accordance with Art. 19 of the Federal Act of 19 June 1959<sup>5</sup> on Invalidity Insurance).

### *3.<sup>6</sup> Transitional provision to Art. 83 (National highways)*

The Cantons shall construct the national highways listed in the Federal Decree of 21 June 1960<sup>7</sup> on the National Highway Network (in its version valid on the commencement of the Federal Decree of 3 Oct. 2003<sup>8</sup> on the New System of Financial Equalisation and the Allocation of Tasks between the Confederation and Cantons) in accordance with the regulations of and subject to the oversight of the Confederation. The Confederation and Cantons shall share the costs. The share of the costs borne by the individual Cantons shall be determined by the burden imposed on them by the national highways, their interest in these highways, and their financial capacity.

### *4.<sup>9</sup> Transitional provision to Art. 112b (Promoting the rehabilitation of people eligible for invalidity benefits)*

From the date on which the Federal Decree of 3 October 2003<sup>10</sup> on the New System of Financial Equalisation and the Allocation of Tasks between the Confederation and Cantons comes into force, the Cantons shall assume responsibility for the current payments made by the Invalidity Insurance to institutions, workshops and residential homes until they have an approved strategy on people with disabilities that also regulates the granting of cantonal contributions towards the construction and running of institutions that accept residents from outside the relevant canton, but for a minimum of three years.

5.<sup>11</sup> Transitional provision to Art. 112c (Aid for elderly people and people with disabilities)

The current payments under Article 101<sup>bis</sup> of the Federal Act of 20 December 1946<sup>12</sup> on the Old-Age and Survivors' Insurance for assistance and care in the home for elderly people and people with disabilities shall continue to be paid by the Cantons until cantonal regulations on the financing of assistance and care in the home come into force.

7.<sup>13</sup> Transitional Provision to Art. 120 (Non-human gene technology)

Swiss agriculture shall remain free of gene technology for a period of five years following the adoption of this constitutional provision. In particular, the following may neither be imported nor placed on the market:

a.

genetically modified plants that are capable of propagation, parts of plants and seeds that are intended for agricultural, horticultural or forestry use in the environment;

b.

genetically modified animals that are intended for the production of foodstuffs and other agricultural products.

8.<sup>14</sup> Transitional provision to Art. 121 (Residence and Permanent Settlement of Foreign Nationals)

The legislature must define and add to the offences covered by Article 121 paragraph 3 and issue the criminal provisions relating to illegal entry in accordance with Article 121 paragraph 6 within five years of the adoption of Article 121 paragraphs 3-6 by the People and the Cantons.

9.<sup>15</sup> Transitional provision to Art. 75b (Second homes)

<sup>1</sup> If the relevant legislation does not come into force within two years of the adoption of Article 75b, the Federal Council shall issue the required implementing provisions on construction, sale and recording in the land register by ordinance.

<sup>2</sup> Building permits for second homes granted between 1 January of the year following the adoption of Article 75b and the date on which the implementing provisions come into force shall be null and void.

10.<sup>16</sup> Transitional provision to Art. 95 para. 3

Until the statutory provisions come into force, the Federal Council shall issue the required implementing provisions within one year of the adoption of Article 95 paragraph 3 by the People and the Cantons.

11.<sup>17</sup> *Transitional provision to Art. 121a (Control of immigration)*

<sup>1</sup> International agreements that contradict Article 121a must be renegotiated and amended within three years of its adoption by the People and the Cantons.

<sup>2</sup> If the implementing legislation for Article 121a has not come into force within three years of its adoption by the People and the Cantons, the Federal Council shall issue temporary implementing provisions in the form of an ordinance.

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 3 March 2002 (Federal Decree of 5 Oct. 2001, Federal Council Decree of 26 April 2002; AS 2002 885; BBl 2000 2453, 2001 1183 5731, 2002 3690).

<sup>2</sup> SR 0.120

<sup>3</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 28 Nov 2004, in force since 1 Jan. 2008 (Federal Council Decree of 3 Oct 2003, Federal Council Decree of 26 Jan. 2005, Federal Council Decree of 7 Nov. 2007; AS 2007 5765; BBI 2002 2291, 2003 6591, 2005 951).

<sup>4</sup>AS 2007 5765

<sup>5</sup>SR 831.20

<sup>6</sup> Article 83 has now been revised. Adopted by the popular vote on 28 Nov 2004, in force since 1 Jan. 2008 (Federal Council Decree of 3 Oct 2003, Federal Council Decree of 26 Jan. 2005, Federal Council Decree of 7 Nov. 2007; AS 2007 5765; BBI 2002 2291, 2003 6591, 2005 951).

<sup>7</sup>SR 725.113.11

<sup>8</sup>AS 2007 5765

<sup>9</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 28 Nov 2004, in force since 1 Jan. 2008 (Federal Council Decree of 3 Oct 2003, Federal Council Decree of 26 Jan. 2005, Federal Council Decree of 7 Nov. 2007; AS 2007 5765; BBI 2002 2291, 2003 6591, 2005 951).

<sup>10</sup>AS 2007 5765

<sup>11</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 28 Nov 2004, in force since 1 Jan. 2008 (Federal Council Decree of 3 Oct 2003, Federal Council Decree of 26 Jan. 2005, Federal Council Decree of 7 Nov. 2007; AS 2007 5765; BBI 2002 2291, 2003 6591, 2005 951).

<sup>12</sup>SR 831.10

<sup>13</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 27 Nov. 2005 (Federal Decree of 17 June 2005, Federal Council Decree of 19 Jan. 2006; AS 2006 89; BBI 2003 6903, 2004 4937, 2005 4039, 2006 1061).

<sup>14</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 28 Nov. 2010, in force since 28 Nov. 2010 (Federal Decree of 18 June 2010, Federal Council Decree of 17 March 2011; AS 2011 1199; BBI 2008 1927, 2009 5097, 2010 4241, 2011 2771).

<sup>15</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 11 March 2012, in force since 11 March 2012 (Federal Decree of 17 June 2011, Federal Council Decree of 20 June 2012; AS 2012 3627; BBI 2008 1113 8757, 2011 4825, 2012 6623).

<sup>16</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 3 March 2013, in force since 3 March 2013 (Federal Council Decree of 15 Nov. 2012 und 30 April 2013; AS 2013 1303; BBI 2006 8755, 2008 2577, 2009 299, 2012 9219, 2013 3129).

<sup>17</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 9 Feb. 2014, in force since 9 Feb. 2014 (Federal Decree of 27 Sept. 2013, Federal Council Decree of 13 May 2014; AS 2014 1391; BBI 2011 6269, 2012 3869, 2013 291 7351, 2014 4117).

Commencement Date: 1 January 2000<sup>2</sup>

## Final Provisions of the Federal Decree of 18 December 1998

II

<sup>1</sup> The Federal Constitution of the Swiss Confederation of 29 May 1874<sup>3</sup> is repealed.

<sup>2</sup> The following provisions of the Federal Constitution, which must be re-enacted as statute law, continue to apply until the corresponding statutory provisions come into force:

a. *Art. 32<sup>quater</sup>* para. 6<sup>4</sup>

Hawking and other forms of itinerant sale of spirits are prohibited.

b. *Art. 36<sup>quinquies</sup>* para. 1 first sentence, 2 second-last sentence and 4 second sentence<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For the use of first and second class national highways, the Confederation shall levy an annual charge of 40 francs on each Swiss and foreign motor vehicle and trailer with a total weight not exceeding 3.5 tonnes. ...

<sup>2</sup> ... The Federal Council may exempt specific vehicles from the charge and issue special regulations, in particular for journeys made in border areas. Such regulations must not result in vehicles registered abroad being treated more favourably than Swiss vehicles. The Federal Council may impose fines for contraventions of the regulations. The Cantons shall collect the charge for vehicles registered in Switzerland and monitor compliance of all vehicles with the regulations.

<sup>4</sup> ... The charge may be extended by federal act to further categories of vehicle that are not liable to pay the heavy vehicle charge.

c. Art. 121<sup>bis</sup> para. 1, 2 and para. 3 first and second sentence<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> If the Federal Assembly decides to submit a counter-proposal, voters shall be asked three questions on the same ballot paper. Each voter has the unrestricted right to state:

1. whether he or she prefers the popular initiative to the existing law;
2. whether he or she prefers the counter-proposal to the existing law;
3. which of the two proposals should come into force in the event that the People and the Cantons prefer both proposals to the existing law.

<sup>2</sup> The absolute majority shall be calculated separately for each question. Unanswered questions shall not be taken into consideration.

<sup>3</sup> If both the popular initiative and the counter-proposal are accepted, the result of the third question shall be decisive. The proposal that receives the greater number of votes from the People and from the Cantons on this question shall come into force. ...

III

The Federal Assembly shall adapt amendments to the Federal Constitution of 29 May 1874 to the new Federal Constitution as regards their form. The decree issued to this effect shall not be subject to a referendum.

IV

<sup>1</sup> This Decree must be submitted to a vote of the People and the Cantons.

<sup>2</sup> The Federal Assembly shall determine its commencement date.

## Contents

Preamble

The Swiss Confederation Art. 1

Aims Art. 2

Cantons Art. 3

National languages Art. 4

Rule of law Art. 5

Subsidiarity Art. 5a

Individual and collective responsibility Art. 6

Human dignity Art. 7

Equality before the law Art. 8

Protection against arbitrary conduct and principle of good faith Art. 9

Right to life and to personal freedom Art. 10

Protection of children and young people Art. 11

Right to assistance when in need Art. 12

Right to privacy Art. 13

Right to marry and to have a family Art. 14

Freedom of religion and conscience Art. 15

Freedom of expression and of information Art. 16

Freedom of the media Art. 17

Freedom to use any language Art. 18

Right to basic education Art. 19

Academic freedom Art. 20

Freedom of artistic expression Art. 21

Freedom of assembly Art. 22

Freedom of association Art. 23

Freedom of domicile Art. 24

Protection against expulsion, extradition and deportation Art. 25

Guarantee of ownership Art. 26

Economic freedom Art. 27

Right to form professional associations Art. 28

General procedural guarantees Art. 29

Guarantee of access to the courts Art. 29a

Judicial proceedings Art. 30

Deprivation of liberty Art. 31

Criminal proceedings Art. 32

Right of petition Art. 33

Political rights Art. 34

Upholding of fundamental rights Art. 35

Restrictions on fundamental rights Art. 36

Citizenship Art. 37

Acquisition and deprivation of citizenship Art. 38

Exercise of political rights Art. 39

The Swiss abroad Art. 40

Art. 41

Duties of the Confederation Art. 42

Duties of the Cantons Art. 43

Principles for the allocation and fulfilment of state tasks Art. 43a

Principles Art. 44

Participation in federal decision-making Art. 45

Implementation of federal law Art. 46

Autonomy of the Cantons Art. 47

Intercantonal agreements Art. 48

Declaration of general application and requirement of participation Art. 48a

Precedence of and compliance with federal law Art. 49

Art. 50

Cantonal constitutions Art. 51

Constitutional order Art. 52

Number and territory of the Cantons Art. 53

Foreign relations Art. 54

Participation of the Cantons in foreign policy decisions Art. 55

Relations between the Cantons and foreign states Art. 56

Security Art. 57

Armed forces Art. 58

Military service and alternative service Art. 59

Armed forces organisation, training and equipment Art. 60

Civil defence Art. 61

Swiss Education Area Art. 61a

School education Art. 62

Vocational and professional education and training Art. 63

Higher education institutions Art. 63a

Research Art. 64

Continuing education and training Art. 64a

Statistics Art. 65

Education grants Art. 66

Encouragement of children and young people Art. 67

Musical education Art. 67a

Sport Art. 68

Culture Art. 69

Languages Art. 70

Cinema Art. 71

Church and state Art. 72

Sustainable development Art. 73

Protection of the environment Art. 74

Spatial planning Art. 75

National Land Survey Art. 75a

Second homes Art. 75b

Water Art. 76

Forests Art. 77

Protection of natural and cultural heritage Art. 78

Fishing and hunting Art. 79

Protection of animals Art. 80

Public Construction Works Art. 81

Public transport Art. 81a

Road transport Art. 82

Road infrastructure Art. 83

Alpine transit traffic Art. 84

Heavy vehicle charge Art. 85

Charge for using the national highways Art. 85a

Use of charges for tasks and costs in connection with road transport Art. 86

Railways and other modes of transport Art. 87

Railway infrastructure Art. 87a

Use of charges for tasks and costs in connection with air traffic Art. 87b

Footpaths and hiking trails Art. 88

Energy policy Art. 89

Nuclear energy Art. 90

Transport of energy Art. 91

Postal and telecommunications services Art. 92

Radio and television Art. 93

Principles of the economic system Art. 94

Professional activities in the private sector Art. 95

Competition policy Art. 96

Consumer protection Art. 97

Banks and insurance companies Art. 98

Monetary policy Art. 99

Economic policy Art. 100

Foreign economic policy Art. 101

National economic supply Art. 102

Structural policy Art. 103

Agriculture Art. 104

Food security Art. 104a

Alcohol Art. 105

Gambling Art. 106

Weapons and war material Art. 107

Construction of housing and home ownership Art. 108

Landlord and tenant Art. 109

Employment Art. 110

Old-age, survivors' and invalidity pension provision Art. 111

Old-age, Survivors' and Invalidity Insurance Art. 112

Supplementary benefits Art. 112a

Promoting the rehabilitation of people eligible for invalidity benefits Art. 112b

Aid for elderly people and people with disabilities Art. 112c

Occupational pension scheme Art. 113

Unemployment insurance Art. 114

Support for persons in need Art. 115

Child allowances and maternity insurance Art. 116

Health and accident insurance Art. 117

Primary medical care Art. 117a

Health protection Art. 118

Complementary medicine Art. 118a

Research on human beings Art. 118b

Reproductive medicine and gene technology involving human beings Art. 119

Transplant medicine Art. 119a

Non-human gene technology Art. 120

Legislation on foreign nationals and asylum Art. 121

Control of immigration Art. 121a

Civil law Art. 122

Criminal law Art. 123

Art. 123a

No time limit for the right to prosecute or for penalties for sexual or pornography offences involving prepubescent children Art. 123b

Measure relating to sexual offences involving children or persons who are incapable of judgement or resistance Art. 123c

Victim support Art. 124

Weights and measures Art. 125

Financial management Art. 126

Principles of taxation Art. 127

Direct taxes Art. 128

Tax harmonisation Art. 129

Value added tax \* Art. 130

Special consumption taxes Art. 131

Stamp duty and withholding tax Art. 132

Customs duties Art. 133

Exclusion of cantonal and communal taxation Art. 134

Equalisation of financial resources and burdens Art. 135

Political rights Art. 136

Political parties Art. 137

Popular initiative requesting the total revision of the Federal Constitution Art. 138

Popular initiative requesting a partial revision of the Federal Constitution in specific terms Art. 139

Art. 139a

Procedure applicable to an initiative and counter-proposal Art. 139b

Mandatory referendum Art. 140

Optional referendum Art. 141

Implementation of international treaties Art. 141a

Required majorities Art. 142

Eligibility for election Art. 143

Incompatibility Art. 144

Term of office Art. 145

State liability Art. 146

Consultation procedure Art. 147

Status Art. 148

Composition and election of the National Council Art. 149

Composition and election of the Council of States Art. 150

Sessions Art. 151

Presidency Art. 152

Parliamentary committees Art. 153

Parliamentary groups Art. 154

Parliamentary Services Art. 155

Separate proceedings Art. 156

Joint proceedings Art. 157

Public meetings Art. 158

Quorum and required majority Art. 159

Right to submit initiatives and motions Art. 160

Prohibition of voting instructions Art. 161

Immunity Art. 162

Form of Federal Assembly enactments Art. 163

Legislation Art. 164

Emergency legislation Art. 165

Foreign relations and international treaties Art. 166

Finance Art. 167

Appointments Art. 168

Oversight Art. 169

Evaluation of effectiveness Art. 170

Tasks of the Federal Council Art. 171

Relations between the Confederation and the Cantons Art. 172

Further duties and powers Art. 173

Federal Council Art. 174

Composition and election Art. 175

Presidency Art. 176

Principle of collegiality and allocation to departments Art. 177

Federal Administration Art. 178

Federal Chancellery Art. 179

Government policy Art. 180

Right to initiate legislation Art. 181

Law-making and implementation of legislation Art. 182

Finances Art. 183

Foreign relations Art. 184

External and internal security Art. 185

Relations between the Confederation and the Cantons Art. 186

Further duties and powers Art. 187

Status Art. 188

Jurisdiction of the Federal Supreme Court Art. 189

Applicable law Art. 190

Access to the Federal Supreme Court Art. 191

Other federal judicial authorities Art. 191a

Cantonal judicial authorities Art. 191b

Independence of the judiciary Art. 191c

Principle Art. 192

Total revision Art. 193

Partial revision Art. 194

Commencement Art. 195

Transitional provisions in terms of the Federal Decree of 18 December 1998 on a new Federal Constitution Art. 196

Transitional provisions following the adoption of the Federal Constitution of 18 April 1999 Art. 197

**AS 2007 5225**

<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the popular vote on 12 March 2000, in force since 1 Jan. 2007 (Federal Decree of 8 Oct. 1999, Federal Council Decree of 17 May 2000, Federal Decree of 8 March 2005; AS **2002** 3148, **2006** 1059; BBl **1997** I 1, **1999** 8633, **2000** 2990, **2001** 4202).

<sup>2</sup> Federal Decree of 28 Sept. 1999 (AS **1999** 2555; BBl **1999** 7922)

<sup>3</sup> [BS **1** 3; AS **1949** 1511, **1951** 606, **1957** 1027, **1958** 362 768 770, **1959** 224 912, **1961** 476, **1962** 749 1637 1804, **1964** 97, **1966** 1672, **1969** 1249, **1970** 1649, **1971** 325 905 907, **1972** 1481 1484, **1973** 429 1051 1455, **1974** 721, **1975** 1205, **1976** 713 715 2003, **1977** 807 1849 2228 2230, **1978** 212 484 1578, **1979** 678, **1980** 380, **1981** 1243 1244, **1982** 138, **1983** 240 444, **1984** 290, **1985** 150, 151 658 659 1025 1026 1648, **1987** 282 1125, **1988** 352, **1991** 246 247 1122, **1992** 1578 1579, **1993** 3040 3041, **1994** 258 263 265 267 1096 1097 1099 1101, **1995** 1455, **1996** 1490 1491 1492 2502, **1998** 918 2031, **1999** 741 743 1239 1341]

<sup>4</sup> Art. 105

<sup>5</sup> Art. 86 para. 2

<sup>6</sup> See now: Art. 139b..

## Additional informations

This text is in force.

---

<b>Decision</b>	18 December 1998
-----------------	------------------

---

<b>In force</b>	1 January 2000
-----------------	----------------

## All versions of this law

---

■	01.01.2020	
■	01.01.2018	PDF
■	24.09.2017	
■	12.02.2017	
■	01.01.2016	
■	14.06.2015	
■	18.05.2014	
■	09.02.2014	
■	03.03.2013	
■	23.09.2012	
■	11.03.2012	
■	01.01.2011	
■	28.11.2010	
■	07.03.2010	
■	29.11.2009	
■	27.09.2009	
■	17.05.2009	
■	30.11.2008	
■	01.01.2008	
■	01.01.2007	
■	21.05.2006	
■	27.11.2005	
■	02.03.2005	
■	08.02.2004	
■	01.08.2003	
■	01.04.2003	
■	03.03.2002	
■	02.12.2001	

---

- 10.06.2001

---

- 01.01.2000

---

- 28.09.1999

### **All editions of this law**

---

*01.01.2000*

Federal Constitution of 18 April 1999 of the Swiss Confederation

For comments and observations: Official Publications Centre  
Last update: 15.09.2018